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THE FORTUNATE ISLES

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Travel

OUR STOLEN SUMMER

A VERSAILLES CHRISTMAS-TIDE

Novels

THE GLEN

THE FIRST STONE

WITH CLIPPED WINGS

THE MAN IN THE WOOD

BACKWATERS

HER BESETTING VIRTUE

THE MISSES MAKE-BELIEVE

CALLE DEL CALVARIO, POLLENSA

THE FORTUNATE ISLES

LIFE AND TRAVEL IN MAJORCA, MINORCA AND IVIZA

BY

MARY STUART BOYD

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ac

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR AND FIFTY-TWO PEN DRAWINGS

BY

A. S. BOYD, R.S.W.

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FOREWARNING

"I HEAR you think of spending the winter in the Balearic Islands?" said the only Briton we met who had been there. "Well, I warn you, you won't enjoy them. They are quite out of the world. There are no tourists. Not a soul understands a word of English, and there's nothing whatever to do. If you take my advice you won't go."

So we went. And what follows is a faithful account of what befell us in these fortunate isles.

M. S. B.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	SOUTHWARDS	1
II.	OUR CASA IN SPAIN	14
III.	PALMA, THE PEARL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN	26
IV.	HOUSEKEEPING	39
V.	TWO HISTORIC BUILDINGS	51
VI.	THE FAIR AT INCA	60
VII.	VALLDEMOSA	66
VIII.	MIRAMAR	79
IX.	SÓLLER	94
X.	ANDRAITX	107
XI.	UP AMONG THE WINDMILLS	117
XII.	NAVIDAD	128
XIII.	THE FEAST OF THE CONQUISTADOR	143
XIV.	POLLENSA	152
XV.	THE PORT OF ALCUDIA	168
XVI.	MINORCA	179
XVII.	STORM-BOUND	193
XVIII.	ALARÓ	203
XIX.	THE DRAGON CAVES AND MANACOR	215
XX.	ARTÁ AND ITS CAVES	225

		PAGE
XXI.	AMONG THE HILLS	242
XXII.	DEYÁ, AND A PALMA PROCESSION	252
XXIII.	OF FAIR WOMEN AND FINE WEATHER	264
XXIV.	OF ODDS AND ENDS	274
XXV.	IVIZA—A FORGOTTEN ISLE	289
XXVI.	AN IVIZAN SABBATH	301
XXVII.	AT SAN ANTONIO	311
XXVIII.	WELCOME AND FAREWELL	320
XXIX.	LAST DAYS	328
	INDEX	335

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IN COLOUR

CALLE DEL CALVARIO, POLLENSA . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

PALMA FROM THE TERRENO 26

VALLDEMOSA 70

SÓLLER 94

AFTER THE FEAST OF THE CONQUISTADOR, PALMA CATHEDRAL . 143

THE ROMAN GATEWAY, ALCUDIA 168

MAHÓN, MINORCA 193

SUNDAY MORNING AT IVIZA 289

PEN DRAWINGS

PAGE

THE CATHEDRAL AND THE LONJA, PALMA 1

A PALMA *PATIO* 9

THE SERENO 13

THE CASA TRANQUILA 14

THE GATE OF SANTA CATALINA, PALMA 19

OUR SUBURBAN STREET 24

CALLE DE LA ALMUDAINA, PALMA 29

A SUPPER PARTY 37

PAGE

THE SATURDAY MARKET, PALMA 39

A CONSUMOS STATION 47

THE CASTLE OF BELLVER 51

PALMA, FROM THE WOODS OF BELLVER 57

SECOND CLASS 60

A CORNER OF THE FAIR AT INCA 64

WHERE THE HILLS MEET THE PLAIN, ESGLAYETA . . 66

CARABINEROS IN THE KITCHEN 77

LA TRINIDAD, MIRAMAR 79

A TIGHT FIT 91

THE MANDOLINE PLAYER 101

AT FORNALUTX 104

SON MAS, ANDRAITX 107

IN THE PORT OF ANDRAITX 117

ABOVE ANDRAITX 123

CHRISTMAS TURKEYS 128

A SCENE OF SLAUCHTER 135

THE COFFIN OF JAIME II IN PALMA CATHEDRAL . . . 150

MARKET DAY AT POLLENSA 152

THE MAIN STREET OF POLLENSA 161

A *NORIA* NEAR ALCUDIA 175

CIUDADELA SEEN FROM THE SEA 179

CALLE SAN ROQUE, MAHÓN 187

COMERCIANTES IN THE FONDA AT MAHÓN 201

AN INTERIOR IN ALARÓ 203

ALARÓ 210

PAGE

IN THE DRAGON'S CAVE 215

MANACOR 221

ARTÁ 225

TOWARDS THE PARISH CHURCH, ARTÁ 229

ENTERING THE CAVES OF ARTÁ 234

PALM-SUNDAY AT SÓLLER 242

DEYÁ 253

PROCESSIONISTS OF HOLY THURSDAY 262

DURING THE CARNIVAL AT PALMA 264

THE WOOER 269

THE NATIONAL SPORT 274

CALLE DE LA PORTELLA, PALMA 279

THANKSGIVING 296

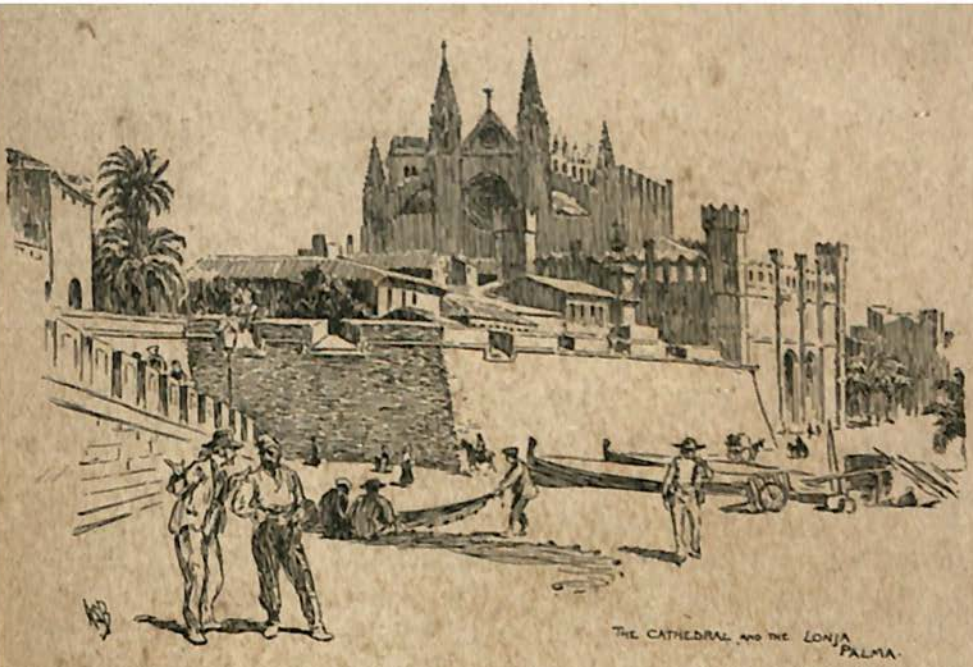
A TRIO AND A QUARTETTE 301

THE GATES OF THE *FEIXAS*, IVIZA 309

THE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, IVIZA 311

THE CHURCH OF JESUS, IVIZA 320

MOORISH TOWER AT THE PORT OF ALCUDIA 328



THE CATHEDRAL AND THE LONJA PALMA.

THE FORTUNATE ISLES

I

SOUTHWARDS

WE had left London on a tempestuous mid-October Saturday morning, and Sunday night found us walking on the Rambla at Barcelona, a purple velvet star-spangled sky overhead, and crowds of gay promenaders all about us.

When the Boy and I had planned our journey to the Balearic Isles (the Man never plans), our imaginings always began as we embarked at Barcelona harbour on the Majorcan steamer that was to carry us to the islands of our desire. So when we had strolled to where the Rambla ends amid the palm-trees of the port, it seemed like the materializing of a dream to see the steamer *Balear* lying there, right under the great column of Columbus, with her bow pointing seawards, as though waiting for us to step on board.

When at sunset next day the hotel omnibus deposited us at the port, the *Balear* appeared to be the centre of attraction. It still lacked half an hour of sailing time, yet her decks, which were ablaze with electric light, were covered with people. Ingress was a matter of so much difficulty that our inexperience of the ways of Spanish ports anticipated an unconfortably crowded passage.

There was scarcely room on board to move, yet up the species of hen-ladder that acted as gangway people were still streaming—ladies in mantillas, ladies with fans, ladies with babies, and men of every age, the men all smoking cigarettes.

Fortunately a recognized etiquette made those whose visits to the ship were of a purely complimentary nature confine themselves to the deck. When we descended to inspect our sleeping accommodation it was to find an individual cabin reserved for each of us; and to learn that, in spite of the mob on board, there were but four other saloon passengers. These, as we afterwards discovered, were a French honeymoon couple and a young Majorcan lady who was accompanied by her *dueña*.

Rain had been predicted, and was eagerly looked for, as none had fallen for many weeks. Yet it was a perfect evening. There was hardly a ripple on the water, and the air was soft and balmy. Behind the brilliant city with its myriads of lights rose the dark Catalonian mountains. Clustered near us in the harbour the crews of the fishing boats made wonderfully picturesque groups as they supped by the light of hanging lamps. And over all, high above the tall palms of the Paseo de Colon, the statue of Columbus pointed ever westwards.

Looking at the sparkling scene, it was difficult to credit that Barcelona, with its surface aspect of light-hearted gaiety, was under martial law, even though we had seen that alert-eyed armed soldiers guarded every street and alley, and knew that but a day or two earlier bombs had exploded with deadly effect where the crowds were now promenading. It was hard,

too, to believe that at that moment the interest of all Europe was centred upon that sombre fortress to the south-west of the town, within whose walls, only five days earlier, Ferrer had, rightly or wrongly, met the death of a traitor.

The warning siren sounded. The visitors reluctantly scuttled down the ridiculous hen-ladder. The moorings were cast away, the screw revolved, and we were off—bound for the Fortunate Isles.

Out of many wondrous nights passed on strange waters I remember none more beautiful. We were almost alone on deck. So far as solitude went the *Balear* might have been chartered for our exclusive use. The second-cabin passengers had all disappeared forward. The French bride and bride-groom had found a secluded nook in which to coo; and the vigilant *dueña* had led her charge into retirement.

We three sat late into the night watching the lights of the beautiful city of unrest fade away into the distance, while over the sinister fortress of Montjuich the golden sickle of the new moon hung like a note of interrogation.

The Spanish coast had vanished. The ship's bow was pointing towards Africa, and wild-fire was flashing about the horizon when at last we descended to our cabins. The lightning was still flashing, but it was far in our wake, when we awoke about four in the morning to find the *Balear* sailing along on an even keel, close by a mountainous coast whose highest promontory was crowned by a lighthouse.

Having dressed and refreshed ourselves with biscuits, and chocolate made over a spirit-lamp, we went on deck while it was yet dark, and watched the land gradually become more and more distinct with the broadening dawn. The Boy, who had early recognised something British in the build of our steamer, made the interesting discovery from the unobliterated lettering on her bell that, though now known as the *Balear*, the vessel had begun her career as the *Princess Maud*, one of a line of steamers coasting between Glasgow and Liverpool.

As the steamer skirted the picturesque coast we tried, not very effectively, it must be admitted, to pick out the bays

and headlands history connects with Jaime, the valorous young King of Aragon, who, accompanied by a great fleet, set sail from Barcelona one September day early in the thirteenth century, determined to wrest Majorca from the tyranny of the Moors, who for hundreds of years had dominated it. But when we had decided that it must have been round *that* point that his ships, with all lights extinguished, had crept at midnight to anchor in *this* bay, the appearance of yet another point and another bay made us waver. Still, there could be no mistaking Porto Pi, with its beacon tower on the point where the Moors, warned of the approach of the enemy, gathered in force to resist his landing.

The sun was illumining the wooded slopes about the ancient castle of Bellver, and shining radiantly upon Palma, lighting up the spires of the noble Cathedral and the encompassing city walls, and shining upon the mountains beyond, as about half-past six we entered the harbour, to find the wharf already busy with people.

We had left grey gloom in London and in Paris. Here all was vivid and sparkling. The air was exhilarating, the port, with its nondescript craft, was a feast of colour. Voices speaking the island tongue sounded strangely in our unaccustomed ears. Our first impression of Palma was one of brightness: an impression conveyed partly by the warm amber and golden tints of the stone of which the charming city is built.

On the previous night we had thought the *Balear* half empty; but with the morning many unguessed passengers made their appearance forward. The *guardia civil*, who was travelling with his little boy, producing a pocket-handkerchief, dipped it in a bucket of water and scrubbed his son's face till it shone, the child keeping up an excited chatter the while.

The honeymoon couple were early on deck looking out for the Grand Hotel omnibus. But we were nearly alongside the wharf before the young Majorcan lady, closely shadowed by her *dueña*, left her cabin.

After the manner of Spanish aristocrats when travelling, she was dressed in black, and carried a fan that seemed to go oddly with her smart hat. She had a beautiful figure, and the graceful carriage of her race. But an expression of discontent, as though she were already weary looking for something that might have been expected to happen but did not, lent an unbecoming droop to her well-cut lips.

Her companion was a shrivelled little woman, whose gums were toothless and whose cheeks bore the pallor of enforced seclusion, but whose alert expression betokened generations of watchful patience. He would be an ingenious as well as an ardent lover whose attentions could escape the glint of those quiet eyes. A black mantilla covered her scant hair, a long semi-transparent shawl draped her narrow shoulders. In addition to her fan she held two parcels, one wrapped in green, the other in orange tissue-paper—a flimsy covering, surely, for a sea-passage.

We put ourselves in the care of the first porter who mounted the gangway—a handsome brigand with a slouch hat, curled moustaches, and yellow boots. Gathering up a mountain of light luggage in either hand, he tripped airily on shore, we meekly following.

A Spanish friend in London had recommended the *Fonda de Mallorca* (locally known as "Barnils'") as the best specimen of a typical Majorcan hotel, and there we had decided to stay until our plans for the next few months were matured.

As we left the harbour the hotel omnibus drew up in front of the Customs Office, and for the third and last time on the journey the solemn farce of the examination of our luggage was gone through. This time it was altogether perfunctory. Not an article was opened. The trunks, which followed on a cart, must have been treated with like trustful generosity, for their keys never left our possession.

As our baggage included a double supply of artist's materials requisite for a six months' stay, it turned the scale

at three hundred pounds. Between Charing Cross and Paris the overweight was charged 15s. 6d. From Paris to Barcelona we paid 35 francs. From there to Palma it travelled free. But though we saw fellow-travellers in variant stages of exasperation over vexatious claims, we paid no duty anywhere. Even the China tea that, unknown to my men-folk, I had smuggled, travelled unsuspected. And as tea in Majorca is a ransom, and Indian at the best, I had, while my small store lasted, an unfailing sense of satisfaction in my contraband possession.

The Hôtel Barnils gave us a cordial welcome. The grateful fragrance of hot coffee was in the air as we were taken upstairs and delivered into the care of Pedro, the chamberman, who was smoking a cigarette as he cleaned the tiled corridors with a basin of damp sawdust and an ineffectual-looking broom.

Our suite of rooms on the second floor consisted of a tiny *salon*, from which on either side opened a bedroom. The smaller had a window to the Calle del Conquistador, the larger overlooked the inner courtyard with its potted palms and ginger-plants. All three rooms were papered alike in a pattern of large black and brown leaves on a yellow ground. The effect was decidedly bizarre. To those of a melancholy temperament it would assuredly have proved trying, even though there was a certain relief in the collection of French coloured lithographs that further adorned the walls.

Our sitting-room, which, like the bedrooms, was paved with tiles, had a tall window that opened to the floor and was guarded by an iron railing. It had two red-covered easy-chairs, four fawn brocade small chairs, and a round table with a yellow and drab tablecloth.

In an amazingly brief space we were seated round that table drinking coffee out of tall glasses, and making acquaintance with the *enciamada*, a local breakfast dainty which is neither pastry, bread, nor bun, yet appears to enjoy something of the good qualities of all three. In form it

somewhat resembles the fossil known to our nursery days as an ammonite. To picture a nicely baked and browned ammonite that has been well dusted with icing-sugar is to see an *enciamada*.

The little breakfast over, we went out to explore the city. Up the street of the Conquistador people were hurrying: men bearing on their heads flat baskets filled with pink or silver fish that were still dripping from the Mediterranean, and women carrying empty baskets. Following the stream, we found ourselves in the market, which is surrounded by tall, many-storied buildings.

It was an animated scene. Everybody was busy—all the people who were not buying were selling. And round about were commodities that were strange to us. The fish-stalls, which were clustered in a corner by themselves, displayed odd fish, many of them repulsive-looking, and all, in our eyes, undersized. The meat stalls revealed joints of puzzling cut, and were garlanded with gamboge and vermilion sausages, as though the Majorcans' love of bright colours manifested itself even in the food they ate.

The more attractive aspect of the fruit and vegetables drew us up the alleys where the salesfolk sat placidly surrounded by huge gourds, radishes eighteen inches long, strange and unappetizing fungi. They had a varied assortment of goods, but the vegetable that appeared to dominate the market was the sweet pepper, or *pimiento;* everywhere it lay in heaps whose colour shaded from a vivid green to glowing scarlets and orange.

One or two ladies in mantillas were marketing, attended by maids whose hair, dressed in a single pleat, showed beneath the *rebozillo* that is the national head-covering of the country-women.

One piece of buying, and one only, did I venture on. The Man's favourite fruit is the green fig, a commodity that in London costs on an average eighteenpence a dozen. Seeing a woman with a hamper of choice fresh figs, I proceeded to try how Majorcan prices compared with those of Britain.

Taking warning by the experience of a friend who, having asked for half-a-crown's worth of grapes in a foreign market, found himself confronted with the impossibility of carrying away his purchase, I discreetly held out the local equivalent of a penny and pointed to the figs.

The vendor, seeing that I had no basket, held a brief colloquy with a neighbouring salesman, which resulted in the production of a piece of crumpled newspaper. Signing to me to open my hands, she spread it over them and began counting the figs into it, carefully selecting the finest specimens from her stock. Having heard that food was cheap in these fortunate isles, I confidently expected that my penny might purchase four green figs: but instead of stopping at a reasonable number, the woman went on piling them up until I felt inclined to say "Hold, enough!" When she desisted, the paper held a dozen juicy purple figs, and half a dozen of the golden green ones that are considered the more delicate in flavour.

A Spanish proverb declares that to reach perfection a ripe fig must have three qualifications: "A neck for the hangman, a robe for the beggar, a tear for the penitent." These had all the required attributes: the slender neck, the rent in the skin, the oozing drop of juice. Better figs, we imagined, were never eaten than the experimental pennyworth we bought that October day in Palma market.

The mind easily adjusts itself to existing conditions. A few minutes later it scarcely surprised us to see an old woman buy ten fine tomatoes for a halfpenny—or to hear her demand an eleventh as just value for her coin.

Leaving the market square, we wandered about the narrow streets, which, with their tall old houses and quaint *patios* —the spacious central courtyards—are full of picturesque scenes. Palma is densely populated, and the moving crowds gave us the impression of a people good-looking and well dressed as well as healthy and happy. Few of the ladies we met wore hats, and to me it appeared odd to see a lady in a

- A PALMA PATIO -

well-cut tailor suit wearing a mantilla as, accompanied by her maid, she did her shopping.

Many of the native women had their hair in a long pigtail, and wore either the *rebozillo*—a neat white muslin headdress, in form like a diminutive hood with a collarette attached—or a coloured silk handkerchief, or both. A small fringed shawl usually covered their shoulders. But it was in the matter of footgear that the Majorcan fancy appeared to run riot. Yellow boots, green boots, cream-hued boots, elastic-sided orange boots were displayed on the feet of otherwise sedately-garbed people of both sexes; and the children wore slippers of lively shades embroidered with gay flowers.

When a sudden shower, descending with tropical force made us seek shelter in a doorway whence we watched the passers-by, we had the opportunity of noting that, though all marketing dames wore smart boots, many of them had dispensed with stockings.

A sharp distinction seemed to be drawn in the dress of the classes. As we passed the church of San Miguel, troops of ladies who had been attending morning service were leaving it. With almost the uniformity of a livery, they wore black gowns of brocaded satin. Black mantillas covered their beautifully-dressed hair, and in addition to their rosaries, each carried a fan.

Our temporary shelter chanced to be close to the gate of Santa Margarita, and when the rain cloud had passed over, we went near to read the inscription graven in Spanish on the stone on one side of the gateway:—

By this gate entered into the city on the 31st day of December, 1229, the hosts of King Don Jaime I. of Aragon, Conquistador of Majorca. As a remembrance of that memorable occasion, on which Majorca was restored to the faith and civilization of Christianity, this gate, called "Bab-al-Kofol" in the time of the Islamite dominion, since then "Esuchidor" and "Pintador," and in modern times "Santa Margarita," was declared a national monument on the 28th of July, 1908, and restored at the expense of the State.

The records of the more ancient races who inhabited the island seem to have almost vanished. The Gymnesias, known as the people whose gracious climate rendered the wearing of clothes a superfluity; the Phœnicians, the Romans, even the Balearic slingers, are well-nigh forgotten, while memorials of the valiant young King of Aragon meet one at every turn.

Hunger sent us back to the hotel to have our first experience of the Majorcan cookery for which it is justly noted.

The cheerful dining-room opened into the square courtyard, whose walls were striped in broad lines of blue and white like the bandbox of a French milliner. On each of the six tables was a large decanter of red wine.

The first dish set before us required a certain amount of courage to tackle. It was a mound of amber-tinted rice in which was visible a weird conglomeration of fish, flesh, fowl, and chopped vegetables. The queer part was the preponderance of empty seashells, for while their contents had doubtless become incorporated with the other ingredients, the empty shells remained insistent and uninviting.

But hunger had made us reckless, and on venturing, we found the *arroz con mariscos* worthy the national esteem in which it is held. Highly seasoned meat of some sort followed. Then came delicately-cooked little fish; then something that defied us to discover whether it belonged to the animal or the vegetable kingdom. There were no sweets, but the dessert was abundant and delicious. Apricots, curiously exotic-looking apples that were streaked with crimson on a pink ground, great clusters of little yellow grapes that seemed as though the sunshine were imprisoned in their skins, and the tempting little baked almonds that are a speciality of Barnils'.

The rain, that in a few minutes had turned the narrow streets into rivers, had ceased as suddenly as it began. The sky was again a deep glowing blue, and the pure soft air was a pleasure to breathe, when ascending a stair we found our-

selves on the flat roof of the hotel, which commanded an extensive view over the city. About us were many flat Moorish roofs, some used as gardens, others bearing great cages full of pigeons. To the south was the port with its gay display of shipping and the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean. To north, east, and west, the towers and domes and city walls encircled us. Beyond were the fruitful plains, and farther still the blue mountains.

Around us rose the softened murmur of the town, the chiming of bells, the whisper of the sea, the sound of voices speaking in strange tongues. All was charming, novel, and wholly delightful.

Chopin's description of Palma, written seventy years ago when, with George Sand, he spent a winter in Majorca, needs no correction to-day:—

"Here I am at Palma," he wrote to his friend Fontana, "in the midst of palms, and cedars and cactuses, and olives and oranges, and lemons and figs and pomegranates. . . . The sky is like a turquoise, the sea is like lazuli, and the mountains are like emeralds. The air is pure like the air of Paradise. All day long the sun shines and it is warm, and everybody walks about in summer clothes. At night one hears guitars and serenades. Vines are festooned on immense balconies. Moorish walls rise all about us. The town, like everything here, looks towards Africa. In a word, it is an enchanted life that we are living."

Soon after midnight a deep sonorous cry awoke me from the sleep of the pleasantly fatigued:—

Alabado sea Dios . . .
Las doce y media . . .
Sereno . . .

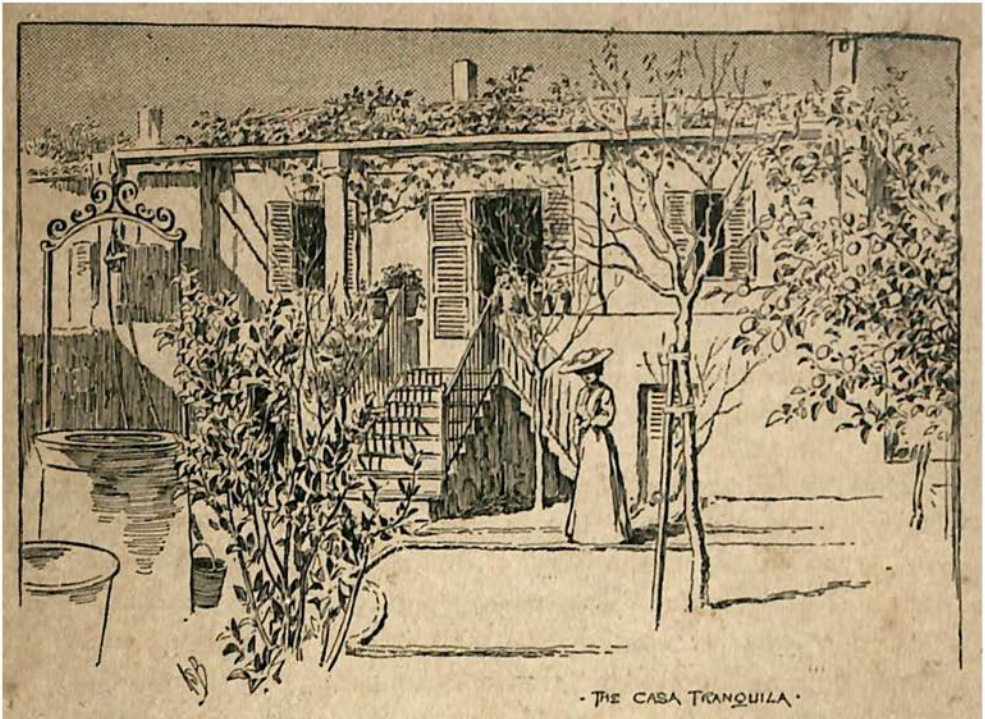
it rang out in the stillness.

Jumping out of bed, I reached the open window in time to see the passing of a black figure wrapped in a great cloak, the rays from the lantern he carried throwing a wavering

circle of light on the pavement beside him. It was the *sereno*, the guardian of the sleeping city.

Pausing before one of the closed doors, he smote on it three times with his staff. Then he turned, and passed out of sight, his long wailing cry again rising into the night.

THE SERENO



· THE CASA TRANQUILA ·

II

OUR CASA IN SPAIN

PALMA was gay with bunting in honour of the birthday of the young Queen of Spain, when on the afternoon of our second day in Majorca we set out to deliver a letter of introduction that was fated to have an important influence on our future arrangements.

Much might be, and probably much has been written on the uses and abuses of letters of introduction. Sometimes the given letter proves a boon both to him who carries and him who receives it. Was not one of our best friends made known to us through the medium of a perfunctory note from a man we had not seen for many years, and whom the presenter of the note had never even met? When we left London we bore a letter of introduction to an Englishman resident in Barcelona, and he in turn gave us a letter to an American friend of his at Palma, who was Consul for certain of the Southern Republics.

The home of the Consul was at Son Españolet, an attractive little residential suburb about a mile beyond the city walls. The busy district of Santa Catalina lies between it and the sea. Undulating groves of almond and olive separate it from the hills.

Taking the mule-drawn tram-car that plies between Palma and Porto Pi, we alighted at Santa Catalina; and, after making various inquiries, found ourselves ringing the gate-bell of the house, over whose tower fluttered the gay banner of the Consulate.

Had the Consul and his wife guessed that these three British invaders were going to trespass on their endurance for a period of six months, I doubt if they would have received us with such courteous geniality. As it was, their reception was so cordial that within half an hour of our meeting I felt emboldened to reveal what had been my secret desire—that we might rent a furnished house near Palma for the winter. Not a fine house—merely a roof under which we could stow our belongings, a centre from which our wanderings about the islands might radiate.

Could they advise us? Did they think such an idea was feasible?

The Consul shook his head.

"Not near Palma," he said. "At Porto Pi or the Terreno you might chance on one. But these are summer seaside places. Most of the houses there are shut up now. You'd find it dull and inconvenient in winter."

"This district seems delightful, and near town. Would there be a chance of our getting a house here?"

"Unfurnished, yes—furnished, no. But why not take a vacant house and hire what you need? There's only three of you. You don't want much."

"Say, Luis!" said pretty Mrs. Consul, "what about the house the Major left last week? That's empty now. Would that suit?"

For a moment the Consul looked meditative.

"I'm thinking," he said. "You're right. That's the very

place. Nice little house. Got a garden. Stable too. And a fine view from the veranda."

"Is the house near? Could we see it?" we asked.

"It's close by, in the Calle de Mas. We'll see about it, right away, now."

The Consul, happily for us, was a man of action. Ringing the bell, he summoned Isidoro, his man-servant, who summoned Margarita, his cook. And Margarita, having received instructions to search the wide world till she found the caretaker of the empty house and to bring her hither, departed at once on her quest. In an incredibly brief space of time she returned in company with a little old woman and two large door-keys.

Following her guidance we walked in procession round the corners of several secluded roads, whose yellow stone walls, flat roofs, and almost tropical foliage looked Oriental under the evening glow.

Viewed from the street, the house we sought, with its green shutters and tiled roof, resembled a hundred others. But when the big keys had performed their task, and we had passed through the two centre rooms and found ourselves on a wide stone-pillared veranda looking across the orange and lemon trees of the gardens to where the Mediterranean lay azure under the setting sun, our minds held no further hesitation. We knew that it was our own house.

Merely to assure ourselves that the house had no equal, we investigated the claims of two other vacant dwellings before returning to the Consulate. One had a basement in which a native family lived—apparently wholly upon garlic. The other attempted to make up in stucco images what it lacked in view.

It was too late that night to take any steps towards securing the house. The Consul, himself a versatile linguist, knowing that our meagre Spanish could hardly be expected to prove equal to the subtleties of house-hiring, arranged to accompany the Man and the Boy next day to interview the owner, and if possible to see the negotiations completed.

I think we were all secretly uneasy until we learned that, on the personal recommendation of the Consul, the landlord had unhesitatingly accepted us as tenants, and that he had agreed to have the garden put in order, to mend any broken panes of glass in the doors or windows, to see that the well was clean, and to permit us to enter upon our tenancy at once.

And then, the house being secured, the important subject of furniture had to be considered. Knowing that with hired goods we would feel conscious of certain restrictions, we had resolved to buy what was absolutely necessary. And the question was—how much or how little furniture would three unexacting people require during six months of a picnicking existence in a gracious climate?

Already there were several indispensable articles in the house—two tables, one large enough to serve as dining-table, a bench, and a tall glass-doored corner cupboard. Beds would be needed, washstands, two more tables of the plainest description, half-a-dozen rush-seated chairs of local make for utility, lounge, chairs for our laziness, and looking-glasses for our vanity.

Still under the Consul's skilled guidance we visited an upholsterer's, a dark and narrow shop where the closely packed stock took up so much room that there was hardly space for a single customer. The shopkeeper, a smiling little round man in a pink shirt, and his daughter, a smiling big round girl in a white frock, entered heartily into the spirit of our requirements; and with the Consul's aid in the reduction of prices, we speedily acquired what was necessary.

We had landed on Majorca on Tuesday morning. Before dusk fell on Thursday our house was not only taken, but the furniture purchased. Electric light is a cheap luxury in Palma, and, for our comfort in the winter nights we were having it put in. Knowing that the installation of the light, the scrubbing out of the house, and the raking up of the garden would occupy a day or two, we decided to remain at Barnils' until Monday, on which morning we would journey out to Son Españolet and take possession. Meanwhile we

roamed about Palma with our eyes open to the necessities of our bare establishment, picking up a broom here, a coffee-strainer there, some wooden cooking-spoons yonder.

Matters moved with surprising briskness. Monday morning found the electric light fixed, the tiled floors well scrubbed, the scant provision of furniture in the rooms, and the garden dug. So, leaving our heavier luggage to follow by cart, we packed ourselves and our smaller baggage into a *carruaje*, and set out for our new home. The progress thither was circuitous, as first we had to journey up and down the narrow streets of the town collecting the smaller purchases we had made.

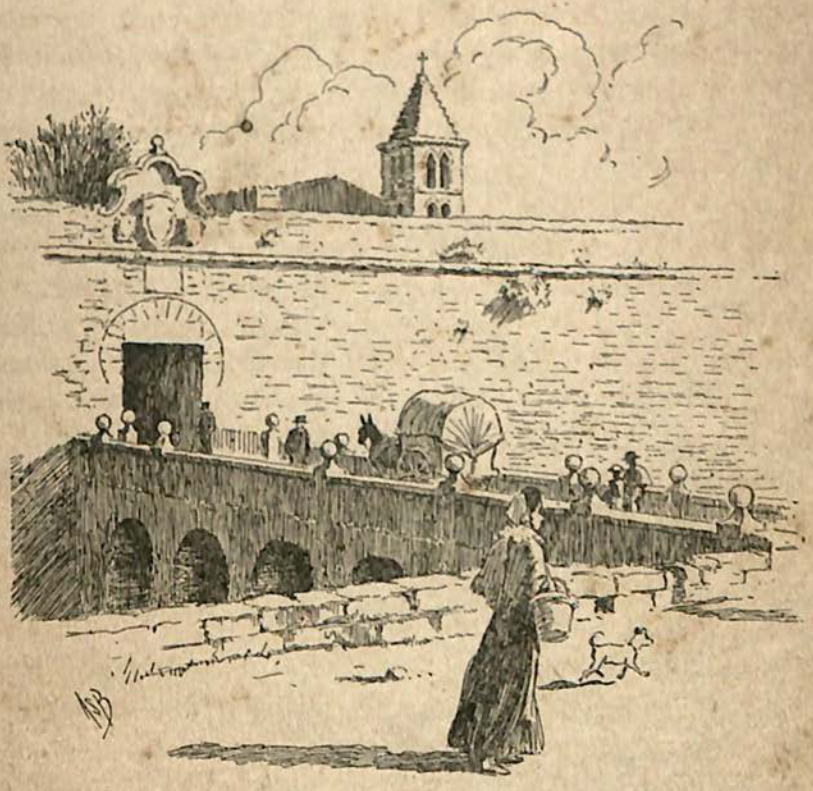
First we called at a grocer's to pick up the supply of provisions that were to form the nucleus of our housekeeping. Then we meant to drive to the china shop where our store of crockery awaited us. Unfortunately the china shop, being situated on a street so steep that it ascended in a series of wide steps, was unapproachable by our two-horse conveyance. Leaving the carriage at the foot of the steps the Man and the Boy mounted to the shop, and by and by reappeared accompanied by a man and a maiden, all four laden with dishes.

Space in the conveyance had been limited before. Now, surrounded by earthenware cooking-pots, and basins, and jugs, and plates, we were jolted over the primitively paved streets, and out beyond the gate of Santa Catalina to the little house in Son Españolet.

Perhaps our sense of possession threw a glamour over the dwelling, but already it seemed to wear a look of home. The scanty furniture was in place, a few minutes sufficed to put the groceries on the shelves, the dishes in the glass cupboard, the earthenware cooking-pots and pans on the kitchen shelf. Then, when the table was spread with our new tea-cups, and decorated with roses and scented verbena from the garden, set in a jug, and the kettle was a-boil over our trusty spirit-lamp, we sat down, in great contentment, to enjoy the first meal in our *casa* in Spain.

The lines even of a foreign householder in Majorca are cast in pleasant places. From our point of view the Majorcan landlord has the worse of the bargain, his tenant the better.

We took our little house for three months, paying in advance the very moderate rent—it was twenty pesetas,



THE GATE OF SANTA CATALINA: PALMA

about fifteen shillings, a month—and agreeing to give, or take, a month's warning. This done, our obligations appeared to cease. There were no taxes, at least none that the tenant was expected to pay. There was no water rate. The well in the garden afforded a supply of pure and wholesome rain-water. If windows were broken the landlord sent, or promised to send, a glazier to put in new panes. In the

rare event of a chimney requiring cleaning, the accommodating landlord was expected to employ a mason to do the work. And with the arrival of the season locally considered best for the annual pruning of the vines—which is the period between the 15th and the 20th of January—a duly qualified gardener, instructed by the owner of the house, appeared and clipped those within our walls.

Our Majorcan home proved to be full of the most charming informalities. Its architecture was the perfection of simplicity; a child might have designed it. It was on one floor only, and measured fifteen paces square. There were neither hall nor passages, and in a short time we found ourselves wondering why we had ever considered such things necessary. All the doors were glazed. The front door opened directly into a sitting-room, whose wide glass door led to another room that opened on to the veranda. To the right of the front door was the Boy's bedroom, to the left an apartment that served as studio. From the back sitting-room opened, on one side, a bedroom that had a useful dress closet; and on the other a compact little kitchen with a cool larder that was almost as big as itself. The kitchen walls were lined breast-high with blue and white tiles; and under the window that looked towards the sea was a neat range of stoves, for the consumption of both coal and charcoal.

The two sitting-rooms boasted the distinction of wall papers, and the ceiling of our favourite room—that which opened on to the veranda—represented an azure sky among whose fluffy white clouds flitted birds and butterflies. At one side of the house was a stable, and an enclosure fitted with stone tubs and jars, meant to be used in the washing of clothes.

The veranda, or *terras*, bade fair to become a perpetual joy to us. It was roofed by a spreading vine, whose foliage even in November was luxuriant. The former tenants had eaten all the grapes except one bunch, of which the wasps had taken possession; and we were either too generous or too timid to dispute their claim.

On the broad ledge of the veranda, on either side of the short flight of steps leading down to the garden, were great green flower-pots. Three held pink ivy-leaved geraniums, one contained a cactus that had exactly the appearance of four prickly sea-urchins set in mould, the others were empty.

The garden measured nineteen paces by twenty-two. Raised paths of concrete divided it into eight beds. The four larger encircled the quaint draw-well; the four smaller were in a row, two on either side of the veranda steps. The beds held a number of fruit trees. There was a sturdy lemon that bore both fruit and blossom, and three orange-trees; one carrying about sixty mandarin oranges. And besides a second vine there were seven almond-trees and two apricots. A shrub in whose racemes of hawthorn-scented blossom bees were busy, we had never before seen. Later we learned that it was the loquat.

Some rose bushes, which obligingly flowered all winter, a jasmine, a tall scented verbena, a long row of sweet peppers, two clumps of artichokes, and sundry tufts of herbs completed our vegetable kingdom.

Majorca is a paradise for the gardener—or would be, were the rainfall more assured—for the climate varies so little that almost anything can be planted at any season.

The day we took possession of the house I sowed some rows of dwarf peas. In a week they were above the ground and continued to flourish exceedingly, until brought to a standstill by the long-continued drought. The rain in January set them a-growing again, and from early February till April we had dishes of green peas from our own ground.

At the foot of the garden, separated from it by a high stone wall, were two small dwellings. One was empty. In the other there resided a cobbler named Pepe, his wife, and a lean red kitten.

The sudden arrival of us foreigners proved an event of extraordinary interest in the circumscribed lives of the pair,

and of the skinny kitten, who developed into quite a handsome cat on our scraps. Mr. and Mrs. Pepe had no veranda, but from their patch of garden a tiny staircase led to a *mirador*—a species of roof watch-tower—from which they had a capital view of the town, the port, and of their neighbours.

As in these sunny November days we lived with the wide glass doors open to the veranda, there was so much to observe in our doings that for the first week at least of our stay Pepe's customers must have been neglected; for morning, noon, and night he was at his post of supervision. As we sat at table we got quite accustomed to seeing his squat figure outlined against the sky as he undisguisedly watched our movements. Sometimes he even carried his quaint spouted wine-bottle and hunk of rye bread up to the *mirador*, and enjoyed his breakfast with a vigilant eye on us.

Pepe had a taste for gardening, and grew chrysanthemums and carnations in the few feet of soil attached to his dwelling. Sometimes, with due ceremonial, he presented us with one of his striped carnations. And one day, when I was in the garden, he hastened down from his post of observation to reappear, smiling broadly, at our side gate, bearing the gift of a sturdy root of French marigold. We showed our appreciation of the compliment by sending him a boot to mend; and, courteous preliminaries having been thus exchanged, we continued to live on terms of distant amity. The marigold I promptly planted in one of the empty green flower-pots, where throughout the winter it bore a constant succession of its brown and orange velvet flowers.

A family from Andalusia—a father, mother, and four children—occupied the house adjoining ours. They seemed good-tempered, easy-going folks, living a happy careless life in this land of sunshine. Their somewhat extensive garden was well kept and fruitful.

The father, like so many of the residents in these islands, was a bird-fancier. And when, on sunny mornings, assisted by his children, he had carried out the dozens of cages con-

taining his pets, and had hung them on his pomegranate-trees, and on the pergola, where the purple convolvulus twined about branches heavy with golden oranges, our world was vocal with their song.

At the foot of their garden was a flourishing little poultry-yard, in which, with laudable success, they reared chickens and ducks and rabbits. They supplied us regularly with eggs, and when any of the live stock was ripe for the pot we always had the first offer of purchase.

The method of procedure was to catch the beast—plump rabbit, young rooster, or whatever it chanced to be—and to carry it, suspended by the legs and vigorously protesting, to the door of our *casa* to exhibit its proportions, and to inquire if we would like to purchase. On the sale being effected, as it usually was, for the quality of their live stock was unequalled, the victim would be taken away, to reappear half an hour later stripped of fur or feather, and with its members decorously dressed for cooking.

Early in the year the Andalusian family was increased by one—a fine boy. A few weeks after, the mother paid me a state visit to receive congratulations and exhibit the baby. Going into the studio, I said:

"Our neighbour has brought her new baby to show us."

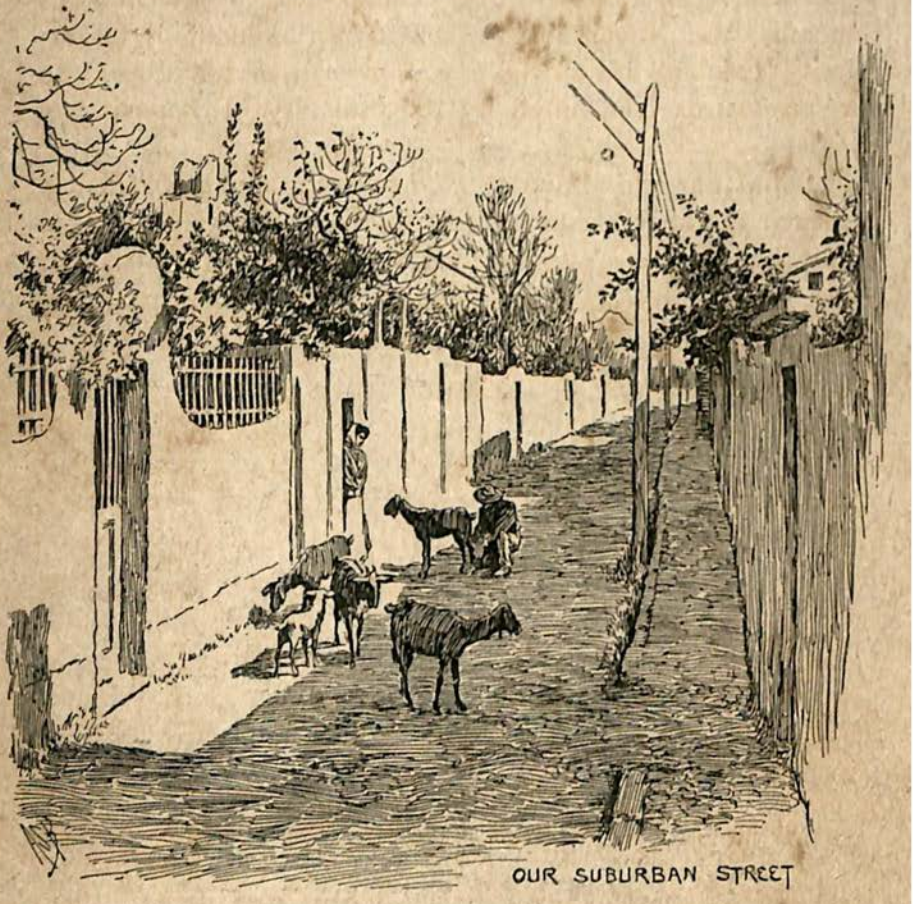
The Man waved me away with a protesting paint-brush.

"No," he said. "Don't buy it. Send her away. I don't mind the ducks and the chickens, but I absolutely refuse to eat the baby!"

Life in the Casa Tranquila, as we had christened our winter home, was a pleasant irresponsible matter compared with existence in ceremonial Britain. Social pleasures we undoubtedly had, but no social duties. Housekeeping ran on the simplest of lines. Maria, the woman who had been key-keeper of the house while it was empty, came in to do the rough work. Apolonia, a smiling, rubicund old dame, with a keen sense of humour, acted as laundress. It was all so easy and unconventional and open-airy that we never quite got over the impression that we were enjoying a prolonged

camping-out, and that it was by accident that our roof was of tiles and not of canvas.

Our morning began with the arrival of a baker who brought the bread, rolls, and *enciamadas* for the day's consumption. We did not use the milk of goats, though, twice daily, a little flock, with tinkling bells, their udders tied up in neat bags of



OUR SUBURBAN STREET

check cotton for protection against the unauthorised raids of their thirsty kids, was driven past our door to be milked before the eyes of each customer. A sprightly matron served us morning and evening with the milk of a cow, which her husband spent his days herding on any stray patches of herbage in the district.

Each day at noon, Mundo, the greengrocer, called with a donkey-cart containing quite a comprehensive assortment of fruit and vegetables. Three kinds of potatoes he always brought—new, old, and sweet—pumpkins that were sold in slices, egg-plants, garlic strung in long festoons, spinach, cauliflowers, sweet peppers, curious fungi, purple carrots, sugar beans; all at astonishingly low prices. I shall always remember the November day when, in a moment of forgetfulness, I asked for a whole pennyworth of tomatoes, and was afterwards confronted by the difficulty of disposing of so many.

A popular article of diet seemed to be the gigantic radishes, in which not only Mundo but all the little shops appeared to do a big trade. We puzzled long over the way in which they could be used before making the chance discovery that they are cut in round slices and eaten raw with soup or meat, as one would eat bread.

III

PALMA, THE PEARL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

AS a place of winter residence for those who like sunshine, and are not enamoured of society, Palma could hardly be excelled.

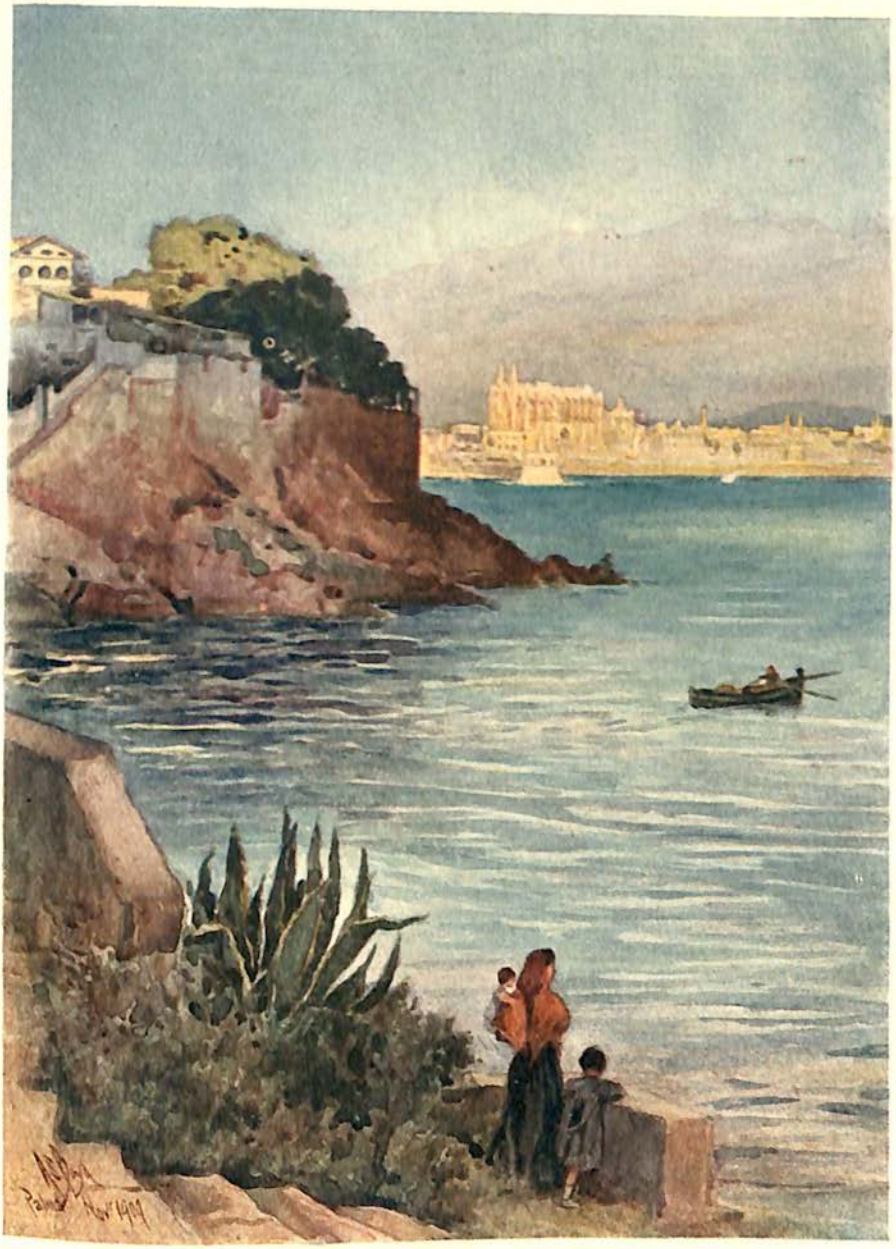
For one thing, the town is just the right size. It is not so small as to allow the visitor to feel dull, or so large as to permit him to become conscious of his own insignificance.

While Palma is bright and full of movement and of cheerful sounds, it is an adorable place to be lazy in. The sunshine and soft air foster indolence; and though there is no stagnation, everybody takes life easily in this walled city by the southern sea. There is no bustle, no need to hurry. What is not accomplished to-day can be done to-morrow. And if to-morrow finds it still undone—why, what is the future made up of, if not of an illimitable succession of to-morrows?

When the ancients christened Palma "the Pearl of the Mediterranean," they gave it a title that to this day it deserves.

Something of the resplendence of the town is due to the warm-coloured stone of which it is built—a stone that shades from the palest cream to warm amber. Every stroll we took through its mediæval streets, every walk along its antique ramparts, every saunter down the mole, made us more and more in love with its beauty, which we seemed always to be viewing under some new condition of light or atmosphere.

The Man never wearied of the crooked secret-looking streets and fine buildings of the old, old city. By day or



PALMA DE MALLORCA, FROM THE TERRENO

night they held for him an inexplicable charm. He was always discovering some new "bit"—a quaint *patio*, a Moorish arch, an antique gateway, a curious interior, a sculptured window.

And the streets were always full of life. A cluster of officers in full dress chattering on the Borne; a company of soldiers marching to the strains of an inspiriting band; a priest, under a great rose-coloured silk umbrella, on the way to administer extreme unction to someone sick unto death—all the spectators falling on their knees as the solemn little procession passed by; or a party of queerly attired natives of Iviza, just arrived by the thrice-a-week boat, and curiously foreign both in speech and appearance, though their island home was only sixty or seventy miles distant; or a string of carriages whose occupants were on the way to a morning reception at the Almudaina, the old Moorish palace, now the residence of the Captain-General.

Everything in the place was new to us, and the feeling of novelty never waned.

As for the Boy, from the moment of our arrival his interest centred in the port. Its constantly changing array of shipping, and the fine sun-tanned buccaneers who did business on its blue waters, supplied him with endless congenial subjects for pictures.

The port of Palma nestles, one might almost say, right into the heart of the city. The chief promenade, the Borne, ends on its brink. The Cathedral and the Lonja dignify its banks.

The gay life of the harbour lies open to the casual observer. Under the ramparts, by the side of the public road, old men in red caps and suits of velveteen that the sun has faded to marvellous hues sit at their placid occupation of net-mending. There, too, when the *falucas* are moored at the edge of the wharf, come the families of the fishermen to join them at lunch—the women bringing down wine and bread and the men supplying a tasty hot dish from the less saleable items of their catch. Sometimes

a cloth is spread, and then the *al fresco* repast assumes quite a ceremonious air.

Stern on to the *muelle*, the long breakwater that partitions off the water of the harbour from the open bay, lie the larger craft: the most important of which are the white-painted steamers of the *Isleña Marítima*, the fleet of boats belonging to a Majorcan Company that carry mails and passengers between the island and Spain or Algeria.

Once Palma was a great maritime centre. Now little foreign shipping does business in her port. But though the bulk of the traffic is local, an open port always holds the element of the unexpected.

Sometimes a leviathan-like liner, making a holiday tour of Mediterranean ports, anchors by the wharf, and her tourists, eager to make the most of the hours at their disposal, hasten on shore to pack themselves into every available form of conveyance and drive off, enclosed in a pillar of dust of their own raising, to enjoy a hasty glance at Valldemosa, Miramar and Sóller. When at sunset they steam out of the harbour it is with the pleasantly erroneous conviction that they have exhausted the attractions of the island.

Once a fine ship that sharp eyes recognized as the private yacht of the Czar of Russia quietly entered the bay, and after a brief stay, during which her voyagers held no intercourse with land, as quietly departed. And after a spring gale a Greek sailing ship, her main-mast gone, was towed in by a French tug. Sometimes it was the capture of a smuggler's *faluca* caught in the act of trying to run a cargo of contraband tobacco that furnished the excitement.

On the frequent feast days Palma was gay with flags. Every Consulate in the town—and they were many—mounted its special banner. The gun-boats sported strings of bunting out of all proportion to their size, the merchantmen flew their ensigns, and though the business of the town was transacted with its customary air of casual lightheartedness, the never-lacking holiday feeling was intensified.

· CALLE DE LA ALMUDAINA
PALMA ·

One November feast day the Boy, who was painting at the port, discovered among the decorated craft a ship flying the British flag; a closer inspection revealed her to be the *Ancona* of Leith, just arrived with a cargo of coal. Nearer home I doubt if the proximity of a Leith collier would have appealed strongly to our patriotism. In that southern latitude things were different. A sudden and fervent desire to hear our own northern accent awoke within us, and, incited by our adventurous son, we determined to board the *Ancona* and pay our respects to her captain.

It was a glorious morning, one of those wonderful mornings when the world seems newly born, that we three went down the mole. Lying beyond the schooner from Sóller, and the *pailebot* from Valencia that was shipping a cargo of empty wicker-cased wine flasks, we came to the *Ancona*.

Three railless plank gangways connected her with the wharf, and down two of the planks Majorcans in their elaborately bepatched blue linen suits were carrying straw baskets of coal. We ventured up the third. Our gangway ended on a six-feet-high platform situated on the verge of a hold still brimful of coal. As we hesitated on our perch, wondering what to do next, a bronzed man in slippers appeared. It was the first mate.

"It's a fine day," the Man gave colloquial greeting. "Is the skipper on board?"

"Ay. It's a real bonnie day," the mate made truthful reply. "No. He's just gone up the quay to see the ship's agents."

The homely words, the familiar accent, felt like music on our ears. A few words of explanation brought the mate to our elevated platform, where he spoke with the inherent appreciation of the Scot of the beauty of the town.

"Ay. It's a bonnie place this. I think it's as pretty a place as I've seen. No. We've been busy on board and I haven't had time to see the town yet. But I'm enjoyin' the view fine from here. The captain? Oh, you couldn't miss

him. You're sure to come across him. He's just up on the front."

So, in quest of a compatriot whom we couldn't miss, we set off up the street. And sure enough, before we had proceeded very far we met the captain face to face.

If the captain of the *Ancona* was surprised at being accosted by a trio of complete strangers, he was too much a Highland gentleman and a man of the world to reveal any astonishment. In five minutes we were all on a friendly footing, our nationality the firm basis of good-fellowship; a little later we were all seated outside the Lirico, over tall glasses of vermouth and seltzer, recalling familiar scenes and discovering mutual acquaintances.

The captain was at a loose end. We were going to the fruit market, to the bookseller's, to the Cathedral. So he came too.

In the market, as he saw me buy big bunches of yellow grapes at twopence-halfpenny a kilo (nearly two and a quarter pounds) his face lit up—"I'll be for sending the steward up here," he said.

Chance favoured us. We turned into the Borne just in time to see an infantry battalion march past to the strains of a good military band. A general had died and the soldiers were on their way to escort his body to the cemetery. The music, which was appropriately solemn, was played with great feeling. And as the procession moved slowly up the street the closed window shutters were thrown open and fair señoras in light dresses thronged the balconies.

It was as though Palma had determined to reveal herself at her best to our companion. Even the interior of the Cathedral, lit by the brilliant sunshine that filtered through the stained-glass windows, seemed grander than ever.

"I've had a splendid time," the captain said when we parted. "Though I've been here two or three times, I never saw so much of the town before."

We were leaving next morning for Miramar, and before our return the *Ancona* would have sailed. But we said good-bye

with the promise of meeting again—a promise that was fulfilled, for on two subsequent voyages the captain was a welcome guest at the Casa Tranquila.

"The captain is a gentleman," the Boy said half-a-dozen hours later when he returned from the ship, where, by special invitation, he had been having a smoke and a chat with her master. "See what he insisted on giving me. I refused, of course, but he made me take *that* and *this*."

"That" was a batch of thrice precious literature in the shape of sixpenny editions of novels and magazines. "This" was a tin of tobacco marked "full strength," that class of dark-complexioned rum-odorous tobacco that the Boy specially affects, and whose lack in Majorca had formed the theme of his only regret.

Life on the native craft in the port is entertaining to watch. The dark-skinned rovers of the deep contrast so oddly with the mildly domestic aspect given by the presence on board of the *patrón's* wife, and by her way of keeping hens loose on deck, and of hanging feminine garments to dry on the poop.

One Sunday morning we had been scrutinizing their doings with the open stare that life in Spain teaches one both to give and to take composedly, when we discovered that luncheon-time had stolen unawares upon us. As we walked back down the pier we glanced inquiringly at the cafés that lined the lower part of the way; they were all crowded with jovial seamen and uninviting. We had resolved to eat at the Lirico, and were leaving the pier, when something in the situation of a little open-air eating-place just on the brink of the sea, almost in the shadow of the city wall, attracted us; and advancing to the awning, under which little groups of people were seated, we demanded food.

The proprietress, a plump, smiling woman with a purple silk kerchief on her head and a green apron, welcomed us in fluent but, unfortunately, unintelligible Majorcan. She knew no Spanish. All we could gather was that if we seated ourselves she would give us to eat. And nothing loth, we sat

down at an unoccupied table whose bare boards were scrubbed as clean as hands could make them.

Beyond the shade of the roof-awning the sun was shining; the pure air filtered through its matting sides, and in our full view the waves were dashing against the rocky shore. At a table close by, three old cronies were dining. Scorning the use of tumblers, they passed the quaint wine-flask from hand to hand, each in turn throwing back his head and letting the red wine fall in a stream, from what to us seemed an unbridgeable distance, between his parted lips. Four soldiers were eating macaroni. Two men who had been fishing off the breakwater were supping thick soup.

A pretty little girl, her hair caught up in a business-like "bun," darted in and out amongst her mother's customers, her dark eyes quick to discern their wants. From inside the shanty that served as kitchen came an appetizing sound of frizzling.

Turning her attention to us, the little girl put the inevitable dish of olives and a flask of red wine on the table; then she placed a wooden fork and spoon, a plate, a tumbler, and a roll, before each of us. Then, with the suggestion of an air of ceremony, she carefully laid at the Man's right hand something resembling a folded piece of clean canvas. It was not until the meal was nearing a conclusion that we discovered it was intended to be used as a napkin.

The table thus spread, she darted into the kitchen and returned bearing a huge flat earthen dish, which held as inviting a mess as we had ever tasted. The main portion of its contents consisted of small thin slices of beef-steak, mushrooms, and strips of potatoes that had all been fried together, after the native fashion, in boiling oil. Daintily chopped green herbs lent a savoury garnish to the whole. After a momentary hesitation, due solely to lack of the customary cutlery, we helped each other with our wooden spoons, and fell to work with good will.

Perhaps there was some charm in the oddity of our surroundings, in the fresh breath of the sea air, in the sparkle

of the blue water; perhaps it may have lain in the discovery that if meat is tender and well-cooked, a fork—and wooden at that—is all the implement required. Certain it is that as we cleared the last chip of potato from the earthen dish we all agreed that we had enjoyed the simple meal more than anything we had eaten in Palma.

When we asked for the bill our little waitress received the sign of departure with dismay; and the mother, running out, added her protest. Something else was evidently in active preparation.

Fully convinced that to eat anything more would be an insult to the dish we had just finished, we waited.

A moment later she triumphantly carried out and set before us a plate containing a slab of fish, thickly covered with minced garlic and floating in a pool of rich red oil. It may have been a delicacy for which the establishment was famed. Our fellow guests were devouring it with evident enjoyment, zealously sopping up the oil with their rolls, and leaving their plates polished clean. But to us it came as an anti-climax.

Carefully inculcated politeness, combined with the knowledge that from the doorway the cook was eagerly watching us for sign of appreciation, induced us to choke it down with an outward affectation of gusto. But we left the garlic and the red oil. Even an exaggerated idea of the obligations of courtesy could not have prevailed upon us to swallow them.

We paid the modest bill and fled, lest worse should follow.

A few days later we returned to the quaint open-air café. It was a lovely evening early in November. All day out of a cloudless sky the sun had beat warmly upon Palma, and the sea had glowed a soft misty azure. We had been busy indoors letter-writing, for it was a mail day. It was only after dusk that we were free and, leaving the Casa Tranquila, set off port-wards to post our letters.

The *Miramar*, the crack ship of the *Isleña Marítima*, was on the point of starting for Barcelona, and all the world of

Palma was hastening towards the harbour to post letters on board; and then, while promenading the mole, to watch her departure.

After the *Miramar* had vanished into the darkness and the spectators had streamed towards the land, we still lingered on the breakwater. There was no moon, the stars were bright, the wavelets softly lapped the stones, and we felt placid and restful until quite suddenly we became aware that we were hungry.

Our proximity suggested the little shanty under the city wall by the sea, and thither we went.

It was the quiet hour there too. Except for three of the hussars we had seen before, the well-scrubbed tables were vacant. The soldiers, recognizing us, gave us friendly greeting, accompanied with the offer of their tobacco packets. Bright-eyed little Catalina ran to fetch the napkin, surely the sole emblem of gentility belonging to the establishment, and the señora herself appeared at the door of the shed, where she presided over the cooking-pots, to give us "Bona nit tengan" and to consult with us as to what we would like her to prepare.

She shook her head when we suggested beef-steaks and mushrooms. At that hour, apparently, beef was "off."

"Would we have soup?—Majorcan soup," she asked.

We shook our heads. No. We did not fancy soup.

Promising us fresh fish, and something with an untranslatable name, she disappeared into the shed. And, content to leave the selection to her, we awaited events.

The comrades in arms had gone, and a pale slender girl, beautiful in the small-featured, refined type so common in Palma, had taken her place at the next table. With her was a friend of the same style, but doubly attractive in that she was overflowing with vivacity. The younger girl sat silent, her hands folded, her head drooping, while the elder—who was knitting a petticoat gay with coloured stripes—chatted briskly. They did not eat, and we guessed they were waiting for some one to join them.

Sitting near them was a handsome taciturn man with a slouch hat, long curled moustaches, and a gaudy kerchief twisted about his neck. That the girls knew him was evident, for though he did not join in their conversation he seemed to listen to all that was said.

Just as we were served with crisp little fried fish, a figure, coming from the darkness where the waves were washing the stones, entered the circle of light. It was the expected man. Hanging up his rod and fishing basket, he took his place at the table beside the girls.

His skin was deeply bronzed, his garments were of blue cotton that sun and sea air had faded to a delicate hue. A scarlet sash was wound about his waist. His naked brown feet were thrust into string-soled green shoes.

Catalina, who had been watching for his arrival, ran out with a slender-spouted bottle of wine and three wooden spoons. Her mother followed close with an earthenware pipkin of the thick Majorcan soup that we had declined.

Grouped in an amicable trio, they ate from the same dish, and in turn drank from the slender spout of the green glass bottle. The pale girl remained pensively silent, but the other continued to talk, punctuating her conversation with dramatic movements of her hands. How we wished we could have understood what she was saying!

When the combined efforts of the three wooden spoons had searched the red earthenware vessel to its depths, the man who came from the sea rose and, lifting it in his hand without a word, walked to the edge of the water and threw the pipkin far into the Mediterranean. Then returning, he resumed his seat.

No one made any comment upon this inexplicable proceeding. Had the inoffending pipkin not been empty it might have seemed as though he were offering a libation to some unseen spirit of the water. But the actively plied spoons had succeeded in scooping out the last vestige of the soup.

In the meantime we had been occupied with our second course, which consisted of lengths of orange-coloured sausage,

served hot with fried potatoes. And a new-comer, an old man, was eating a big plate of macaroni.

The nimble Catalina, flashing out, set a flat dish, heaped with some sort of stew, before the trio. What its contents were we could only guess. The lively maiden and the man were already poking among them with their wooden forks. The pensive girl had produced a silver fork and was delicately helping herself, fastidiously turning over the ingredients The handsome reticent man sat motionless but observant.

- A SUPPER PARTY -

They ate in leisurely fashion—nobody hurries in Palma The gay girl rattled on in her musical voice, gesticulating with her pretty hands the while, only occasionally dropping the thread of her dramatic recital to send her fork foraging with the others, or to throw back her head and let the red wine trickle down her throat.

"Will he throw that dish away when it is empty?" we were wondering, when the señora, who was making a special effort on our behalf, appeared in person carrying a tempting combination of sweet peppers and young pork.

The question answered itself. When they had finished, the dish stood empty and ignored. The wine flask was refilled, and when we had paid our score—wine included, it came to about sevenpence each—we left the quartette still sitting under the flickering light by the edge of the unseen waves : the charming girl still lively, the pretty one distraite, the fisherman amiable, and the handsome listener still silently attentive.

It had been an odd little interlude—nothing to relate, indeed, but one of those petty excursions beyond one's own stereotyped world that make the observers feel, for the moment, as though they were living in somebody else's life, not in their own.

We finished the evening at what chanced to be the popular entertainment. If I remember correctly, it combined the attractions of a cinematograph and a variety show.

We were again out in the starlight, and walking briskly westwards towards Son Españolet, when the Boy said abruptly :—

"I wish I knew why that man threw the pipkin into the sea!"

· THE SATURDAY MARKET - PALMA ·

IV

HOUSEKEEPING

ALTHOUGH, at Son Españolet, we were subject to no police or other rate, a small weekly tax was levied with extreme punctuality, on behalf of himself, by a functionary called the *vigilante.*

The most onerous labour of this alleged guardian of the public would appear to have been the collection, on Sunday mornings, of a penny from each householder. I trust I do not malign a worthy citizen, when I hint that these periodic visits were the only occasions on which most of his supporters were made conscious of the *vigilante's* existence.

His professed duties were to protect the interests of the residents in the district by prowling about at night, to escort timid wayfarers home by the light of his lantern, and, like the *sereno*, to call those who wished to be roused at an early hour. But what manner of need a community already rich in police, *serenos*, *carabineros*, and *consumeros*, had of a *vigilante*, was hard to imagine.

Nobody seemed to know who appointed the *vigilantes*. The Boy had a theory that our *vigilante* had assigned himself to the post, and that his sole exertion lay in calling to collect the fees.

On the morning of our first Sunday at the Casa Tranquila an imperative knock sounded at the front door. It was the *vigilante*, a good-looking white-bearded man clad in blue cotton. His designation was inscribed in bold letters on his cap-band. Having been forewarned of the custom, I handed over the expected ten centimos, which he accepted with the dignified courtesy of one who receives a right, and departed.

Two hours later the Boy, who had been out at the time of the visit, answered a second summons.

"It's the *vigilante*," he said, returning to the veranda where we were sitting. "Has anybody got a copper?"

"But I gave the *vigilante* his penny this morning," I said, hastening to the door.

At my approach the applicant, recognizing me, waved the matter aside, as though the mistake had been mine, and he was graciously pleased to ignore it.

"The houses are so many—one forgets," he said, and strutted off without loss of dignity.

On Christmas Day he paid us an extra visit, and, sending in a card with his best wishes, awaited, not in vain, a monetary expression of our good-will.

The card, which was resplendent in rainbow tints, and richly emblazoned in gold, bore a representation of a young, dapper, and exquisitely dressed *vigilante* who was smoking a cigar. At his feet were portrayed a noble turkey, several bottles of champagne, and other seasonable dainties. A side tableau showed the *vigilante*, armed with his staff of office and a huge bunch of keys, opening a street door to a belated couple who, presumably, had been locked out.

On the reverse side of the card was a long poem, which, on behalf of its presenter, claimed many good offices; notably, that he captured the evil-doer, and that, filled

with fervent zeal, he watched over our repose. It concluded by stating :—

"I try to be in all
A perfect Vigilante."

Apart from similar curious and amusing conventions, with which one has to become acquainted, the early days of housekeeping in Majorca find the foreign resident grappling with a succession of petty difficulties. Besides the differences of language, of coinage, of weights and measures, the dissimilarity of climate renders advisable, even necessary, a mode of living that would be quite unsuited to dwellers in Britain.

To begin with the morning—the customary Majorcan breakfast, which even at the best hotels consists of a glass of coffee, or a tiny cup of very thick chocolate, and tumbler of water taken with a single roll, or an *enciamada*, is a meal from which the ordinary Briton rises hungry. And one wonders why the Spanish landlord, whose table is so lavishly spread at other meals, should practise a false economy in the matter of breakfast. For, after all, a roll costs only a half-penny. Dinner is invariably an early function, and an extensive one, for at their two later meals Spaniards make up for their abstinence at breakfast. Between the two o'clock dinner and supper, which is served at any time between eight and ten o'clock, there is a long blank, which the English visitor usually bridges with a cup of tea.

To return to the question of breakfast. At the Casa Tranquila we compromised the matter, and broke our fast on an unstinted quantity of coffee or chocolate and milk, taken with fruit, rolls and butter, and *enciamadas*. Majorcan breakfast rolls are of two kinds—the ordinary crisp ones, and, what we liked better, a soft species called *panecillos de aceite*.

Bacon is unknown in Majorca, though ham, of strong flavour and repellent aspect, may be had. It sells at twopence an ounce; and if you wish to astonish the

vendor, you can do so by ordering more than a quarter of a pound.

We had been warned that we would be forced to do without butter while in the islands. But matters have progressed—in Palma at least—since the old butterless days. Now the better class grocers sell a peculiarly white butter that is made at Son Servera, near Artá; and almost every provision shop stocks a tinned salt butter that comes from Copenhagen. By the way, the purchaser must not be surprised when asked if it is "pig's butter" he wants. The salesman only means lard.

Cow's milk, another article of diet that used to be scarce in the islands, can easily be obtained. The price charged is almost the same as in London and the milk is much richer.

With the aid of a Spanish dictionary it had been a comparatively simple matter to make out a list of groceries with which to furnish the shelves of our empty larder. But I must confess that a first visit to a butcher's shop made me wonder if Majorcan sheep and oxen differed in construction from British animals, such odd forms did their dead flesh present.

Cold storage is unknown in Palma. The beasts are killed, cut up, and sold almost before they have had time to cool. And, if they were not invariably killed young, their flesh could hardly be so good as it is, the lamb especially being sweet and tender.

A fact that forcibly strikes anyone from a meat-eating country is the small quantities of animal food consumed. Where the wife of a British working-man might spend a shilling on beef, a Majorcan would spend twopence. Naturally the meat is sold in small pieces, and inspection is courted. The east-end butcher's printed command to his customers—"Keep your hands off the beef," would be scorned in the Balearic Isles. If you shop in native fashion, you walk about the shop, turning over and critically examining the pieces exposed within easy reach. When your selection is

made you need not invest in any great quantity. If you fancy calf's head, custom does not compel you to buy a half head. You can have a pound, a half-pound, or even a slice.

If your taste turns to fowl, at your request the bird suspended by its heels is halved, quartered, or wholly dismembered. Its limbs may lack the noble proportions of a Surrey capon, but they will be well flavoured and succulent, and you can acquire a wing and slice of the breast, or a leg, or a yet smaller portion, as your fancy inclines.

We had heard that Majorcans were apt to tax foreigners by making them pay more than was customary for anything purchased, but such occurrences were quite outside our experience; though I did come across an example of Majorcan reasoning that was so amusingly illogical that I am tempted to repeat it here.

Finding in our picnicking style of housekeeping that a cold tongue was a useful thing to have in the larder, I frequently ordered one from the estimable butcher who served us. For a time the price charged was moderate. One day without warning it was increased by a half.

My Spanish unaided did not enable me to argue the matter, but Mrs. Consul chancing to be with me next time I called at the shop, I got her to inquire the reason of this sudden and unexplained change of rate.

"Yes. The tongue was a small one, and the price high," admitted the plump wife of the butcher, who acted as his accountant. "But then I had charged the señora too little for those we had supplied her with at first. And though we have many customers, each ox we kill has only one tongue. And, as I had charged the señora too little for the others, to be just to myself I was obliged to ask more than the true price for the last one!"

The method of reasoning was so delightfully irrational and absurd that I cheerfully paid the confessed overcharge, and we left the shop laughing. Probably the worthy dame

wonders to this day what we found entertaining in the situation.

Many good and cheap eatables are to be had in Palma if one knows where to look for them. By degrees we found out the best place to buy the tasty little pies filled with fish, or meat, and herbs, raisins and pine-seeds, or the funny turn-overs stuffed with spinach, that all the bakers make; and discovered the confectioner who sold the nicest cakes and sweets, and where to buy freshly-baked almonds, and who had the best quince preserve.

A little investigation introduced us to articles of food that we would never have met had we continued to live in a hotel—to the *cocas* that so closely resemble the Scottish "cookies"; and the *bizcochos*, that are just crisp freshly toasted slices of the largest sized *cocas*.

When we arrived in October, fruit was plentiful. Delicious grapes were selling at twopence-halfpenny a kilo (about a penny a pound), and ripe purple or golden figs were eighteen a penny. As the winter advanced the price of grapes gradually rose. And though one day in early December I bought for fivepence in the market four pounds of well-flavoured yellow grapes, by the end of January the finest were a peseta (about ninepence) a kilo.

Fresh figs gradually declined in flavour as they rose in price. And towards Christmas the country folks, who come in on Saturday mornings to the smaller market that is held in the Plaza de Mercado, began to bring in rush baskets of the home-dried figs that have been ripened in the sun and packed between fig leaves.

The continued drought raised the price of vegetables, though small cauliflowers were still only a halfpenny each, and a good sized bunch of carrots could be bought for the coin that is rather less in value than a farthing. Most Majorcan carrots are purple in hue, so deep a purple as to be almost black. They have to be partially cooked alone, before being added to anything else, as their colour dyes the water black. It is their only fault. Their flavour is excellent.

Early in February we began to use the green peas and turnips that in November I had sown in our garden; but for the lack of rain they would have been ready a month earlier. And an occasional sowing of spinach yielded a quick and unfailing supply throughout the winter.

The question of firing in so genial a climate is an easy one to answer.

For cleanliness, coolness, convenience and economy in cooking there is no fuel that compares with charcoal. As a charcoal stove has no flue, the lighting is attended with a certain amount of smoke from the resinous sticks that are sold specially for the purpose of kindling. But once the charcoal is lit it gives no further trouble. It will cook slowly or quickly, as desired, scarcely soiling the outside of the vessels used in the process: and will stay alight, without much attention, as long as the cook requires. Further, it has the exceptional merit of keeping its heat concentrated within a small area, so that the temperatures of both the kitchen and the cook remain normal.

Our favourite sitting-room—the one that opened directly to the veranda—had the unusual advantage of an open hearth, and a few chilly days that occurred in November made us hasten in search of logs for burning.

Inquiry in the neighbourhood directed us to a large saw mill in the Calle de la Fábrica, where we ordered what to us was an unknown quantity of firewood. The price paid was less than five shillings. When the wood was delivered we were amazed to find that it half filled a cart; and that, in addition to an abundant supply of both logs and rough wood all cut into convenient sizes, the kindly saw-miller had included four little slabs of the resinous wood used for kindling.

The wood was built up on the floor under the lower shelves of our roomy larder, and there, all through November, December, and the first half of January, it lay untouched.

We had got to the point of discussing what we would do with it on our leaving for England, when the weather

turned chilly enough to afford us excuse for indulging in the luxury of a log fire. But though we had a fire on every occasion when artificial heat was necessary, there were still logs remaining when at the end of April we quitted the Casa.

A prominent feature of our district, which lay just without the walls of Palma, was the elaborate system employed to guard against the smuggling of contraband goods into the city.

The boundary of Son Españolet, which joined the country, was heavily guarded. In addition to high walls and much intricate zigzagging of barbed wire, wherever two roads met there was a little station-house, or, to be more exact, a shanty, for the shelter of *consumeros*, both male and female, whose duty it was to examine all goods entering the city limits. And at frequent intervals all along the boundary roads was a species of sentry-box, usually containing a chair and a water-jar, in which for sixteen hours a day a *consumero* was supposed to keep watch over his own bit of boundary, and to be ready, if anything suspicious attracted his notice, to warn the others, by a series of shrill whistles, to be on the alert.

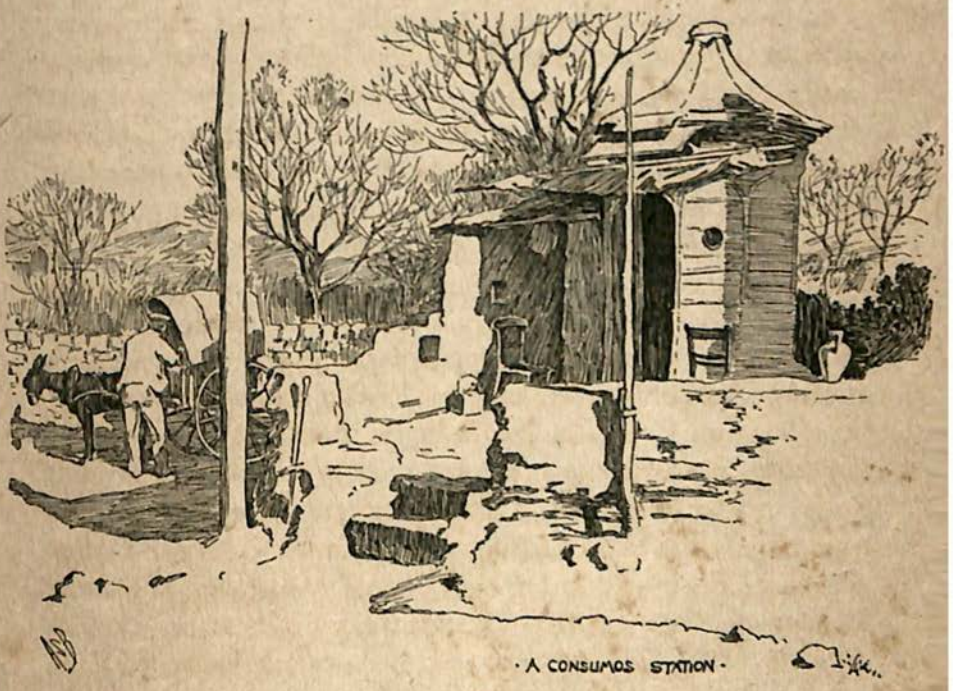
During the long hours passed in enforced idleness at their posts, many of the men had contrived to give their surroundings quite a home-like appearance. A pleasant man, whose location was at the end of our road, always seemed to have his children playing about him; and often his wife used to take her knitting and the newest baby, and the family goat and a big earthenware pan of amber-tinted rice, and make quite a picnic under the trees near his watch-box.

Another *consumero* had a stripling vine that he was carefully training up the trellis over his shed. We sometimes saw him watering it. And one, a tall silent man, whose station abutted on a piece of vacant ground, had gradually erected quite a long range of hen-coops along the base of a warm wall; and there he would stroll in the sunshine attended by a flock of flourishing poultry, chiefly of the Plymouth Rock breed.

But these were exceptions. The majority of the *consumeros*

seemed content to lazy away their days and doze away their nights as comfortably as possible. When the early winter darkness had fallen, it was picturesque to see them lighting a brazier, or sitting huddled up in their warm brown blankets beside its glowing embers fast asleep.

When we had been spending the evening in town and were coming home late, we sometimes enjoyed waiting until



we were close upon one of these muffled figures, and then, in chorus, saying politely "Buenas noches."

Then we would see the comatose form galvanize into a semblance of life, and hear a drowsy voice from the midst of the enwrappings reply "Buenas noches tengan."

The discovery that the monetary recompense for the sixteen hours that the *consumero* worked or played was only two pesetas—or about eighteenpence of English money—showed that if he was not overwrought neither was he overpaid.

At nightfall these guardians of our district were reinforced by the addition of two active young *carabineros* who carried loaded rifles. So between the police, the armed soldiers, the sleepy *consumeros*, the elusive *sereno* and the ornamental *vigilante*, the residents of Son Españolet ought to have gone to bed with a feeling of security.

The question of language is a somewhat grave one in Majorca, where the inhabitants naturally, but inconsiderately from our point of view, insist upon speaking their native tongue, which is neither Spanish nor French, but sounds like a corruption of both.

Majorcan, which is said to be much older than *Castellano*, the official language of Spain, is closely allied to *Catalan*. And though many words suggest French, Spanish, and even Italian influence, the islanders seem, by an ingenious chipping of terminations and the addition of weird sounds entirely their own, to have evolved a tongue which goes far towards outdoing all others in unmelodious sounds. A peacefully animated conversation in Majorcan suggests impending bloodshed. To overhear a quarrel would be horrific. Happily discord is rare in Majorca. As far as our six months of experience showed, a better natured or more harmonious people never existed.

The dialect in use in Minorca and Iviza, though practically the same as that of Majorca, varies in each island. So it is not surprising that the visitor to the Balearic Islands is strongly advised to confine his efforts to the acquirement of Spanish, not even to attempt to learn Majorcan. And indeed the facilities for doing so are few. We could find no Majorcan dictionary, though a weekly paper in the language, *Pu-Put*, is published in Palma.

All the educated classes speak Spanish fluently. Yet in most of the shops, even in Palma, and in the country districts, the native language prevails.

Very few of the working women understand Spanish. Their lives having been passed on the islands, they remain ignorant of any but their mother tongue; though it is

common to find their menfolk speaking Spanish well, owing to their having been in the army, or to their having passed the period of voluntary exile that most of them serve almost as they do the demands of the State.

Those who know, say that Majorca is a bad place to learn Spanish in; that in order to have a good accent the intending traveller is best to acquire it elsewhere. And as Borrow says, you must open your mouth and take your hands out of your pockets to speak Spanish.

Before leaving London we tried, after a very desultory fashion, to pick up a little Spanish. The Boy, who took Berlitz lessons, got on famously and was our mainstay from the moment we crossed the Spanish frontier at Port Bou. But he declares that he had not been long in Palma before he found himself speaking Spanish with a Majorcan accent.

For my part, in point of language I found the direction of even so small an establishment as the Casa Tranquila very puzzling, especially at first. After carefully gleaning a knowledge of the Spanish coinage that enabled me to count up to say ten, in pesetas and centimos, it was bewildering to find sums calculated in *reals* and in *perros grandes* and *perros pequeñas*.

I shall never forget the first time Apolonia, the laundress, appeared to deliver up our clean linen and to receive her just recompense. When I inquired how much we owed her, Apolonia told me the sum, but she did it in Majorcan.

"Onza reals, cuatro centims, dos centims."

"Que vale en pesetas?" I asked, but Apolonia could not reckon in pesetas. Raising her stubby fingers, she proceeded to make cabalistic signs in the air, repeating the whole "Onza reals, quatro centims, dos centims," in a voice that grew louder and louder, as though the more noise she made the more likely was she to pierce my thick understanding.

Maria, hearing the discussion, left her dusting, and running swiftly on her string-soled *alpargatas*, came to the rescue.

If matters had been bad before, they were now worse. Four hands were in the air. Two voices in Majorcan, that

became momentarily more strident, kept repeating the tale of reals and centims until, feeling undecided whether to laugh or to cry, I cut the matter short by emptying the contents of my housekeeping purse on the table and imploring Apolonia to help herself.

After many protestations she agreed to do so. And with much reluctant and timorous hovering of her fingers over the coins, at last selected the exact sum; which, before taking possession of, she carefully spread before my eyes, calling upon Maria to witness that she had not abused my trust.

The calculations of Mundo, the vegetable man, were—if possible—more distracting; for having inherited the national characteristic of honesty to an almost unnatural degree, the worthy Mundo, in his desire to be strictly just in his dealings, had a way of splitting farthings that sometimes proved inexplicable, not only to his customers but also to himself.

How often, when he stood puzzling over some fraction of a penny, have I felt impelled to say rashly: "Bother the expense, Mundo. I'll make you a present of the half farthing!"

Fortunately for Mundo's opinion of my sanity, the spirit of economy that tinctures the balmy air of these Fortunate Isles prevented any such extravagant proceeding.

THE CASTLE OF BELLVER

V

TWO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

AFTER we were fairly settled in our house our first excursion naturally was to the Castle of Bellver, the ancient fortress that, from the veranda, we saw clearly silhouetted against the western sky.

The afternoon was glorious. The sky was a cloudless blue, the sunlight cast deep shadows; to drive there in one of the quaint, open-sided tramcars would have been a treat. But there had been thunder in the night, and the apprehensive authorities had decided that it was a day for bringing out the closed vehicles. So we sat in the stuffy little car, and drove out through crowded Santa Catalina and across the bridge that spanned the dry *torrente* of San Magin, and past the *consumos* sheds towards the Terreno, the favourite summer resort of Palma folks, whose charming villas clothe

the slope leading to the steep hill on whose summit stands the old castle.

The sun was hot, the air exhilarating. Flowers—roses, zinnias, plumbago, chrysanthemums, geraniums—still bloomed in the villa gardens. To us it was a glorious summer day. To the Majorcans it was already winter. The pretty houses were nearly all empty. Their owners had returned to town.

The old road to the Castle is a stiff climb up a rocky slope. The new road is an excellent carriage drive that winds round the hill. We chose the steep way, and found ourselves frequently pausing and turning to look back across the sparkling waters of the bay to Palma, which at that moment was looking, as it so often does, like some celestial city.

The air was fragrant with the essence of the pines that clothed the slopes—at their feet tall pink heath and wild lavender were in bloom.

When Jaime the First built Bellver for a summer palace, he made it an invincible fortress. One thing only could one imagine as more difficult than getting into the Castle, and that would be getting out of it. Yet, had we so willed, on this balmy afternoon the hitherto impregnable stronghold with its deep moat, its implacable walls, might have been ours without even a show of resistance; for when we reached the gateway we found it open and unguarded.

But fortunately for the reputation of Bellver our mood was pacific; and we were content to linger without until an old woman, who had espied us as she was leaving the Castle with what was presumably the washing of the custodian in a chequered handkerchief under her arm, ran back calling loudly for "Bordoi."

Bordoi appeared in the person of the custodian of the Castle. He was an old soldier, gaunt, lean, courteous, and evidently possessing a genuine pride in his charge.

The first thing to which he called our attention was the grating set high over the entrance, through which, after

the endearing fashion of their time, the occupants of the Castle were accustomed to shower a gentle hint to depart, in the form of arrows or boiling water, upon the heads of any visitors whose appearance they did not fancy.

The Castle, which is in the form of a circle, is built round a courtyard containing a great draw-well. Looking down, it was interesting to me to see that the moist sides of the interior were thickly coated with luxuriant maidenhair fern, such as we had years before noticed growing inside the mouth of the well in the house of the maker of amphoræ in Pompeii.

Reaching down his long arm, the custodian picked me a frond, explaining that it made a wholesome medicinal drink —"quite as good as sarsaparilla."

And here an odd query occurs to me. Does the office of caretaker conduce to dyspepsia, or does the enforced leisure of the occupation dispose to hypochondria? During a little journey through the Shakespeare country, for instance, it was impossible—even for such very polite people as ourselves—to avoid noticing the boxes of patent pills or of much-vaunted lotions that figured prominently amongst the private possessions of the people who showed us the places of interest.

The stern face of the old keep has frowned on many tragic sights. It was up these rocky slopes that the headless body of the third Jaime was borne, after his luckless attempt, at the battle of Lluchmayor, to wrest his kingdom from a usurper. And it was there, too, that the boy son who had fought so bravely by his father's side was carried, desperately wounded.

In more recent times Bellver has acted the part of a State prison. Political prisoners, numbering as many as three or four hundred at a time, have been immured within its massive walls. It was easy to picture them clustering in the spacious courtyard about the well, or pacing the open-sided gallery overlooking it, or lingering on the flat roof, from which such an amazingly comprehensive view may be had.

Seen from beneath, the height of the Castle is dwarfed by its encircling walls. It is only on looking down from the battlements and seeing the immense depths of the surrounding moats that one realizes the strength of the inflexible grip in which captives would be held.

In these days a rescue by means of airship might be feasible. For an aviator to alight on the vast flat circle of the Castle roof, to pick up a prisoner, and fly off again, would presumably be an easy matter. But in those days airships were unknown, and it must have been maddening to be pent so near Palma that every building might be distinguished, to be able to note the coming and going of the ships, to view the fair fertile country in every direction, and yet know that the deep encompassing moat rendered any attempt at escape a futility.

In one of the rooms a memorial tablet had been inserted in the wall in remembrance of a deposed Minister of State, who endured six years of incarceration before dying there in 1808.

In his chamber a window, reached by steps and stone-seated, afforded a lovely prospect across the blue waters of the harbour to the stately Cathedral and the town. It was pitiful to see that the gaudy tiles that paved the embrasure were worn bare, and to note that, by some curious coincidence, the face in the bas-relief looked longingly towards the window.

In the immense kitchen the most remarkable feature was the chimney—a space like a large room—of which the smoke-blackened sides narrowed up and up, until far overhead its orifice appeared a mere eyelet of light against the sky. But this ancient fireplace had been superseded by a long range of charcoal stoves, and the savour of roasting oxen will never again ascend that giant chimney.

The Castle of Bellver is full of interest, but it is the roof that holds the visitor fascinated. On its surface one can walk round and round in perfect security, meeting a fresh and glorious picture at every turn. To the north the high

velvet hills bar the view. Southwards, beyond the clustered roofs of the Terreno, the Mediterranean ripples away towards the African coast. Towards the west amid the hills lies Ben Dinat, where, after the historic battle, the Conquistador dined well off bread and garlic; and east is the lovely plain of Palma, with Santa Catalina and Son Español (and the quite inconspicuous Casa Tranquila) in the middle distance.

Round the battlements many names, both of the bond and of the free, were carven. Our guide proudly pointed out three that, coming amongst the Spanish designations, we read with a curious sense of familiarity:—

"JOHN SUTHERLAND BLACK.
JAMES HUNTER.
JAMES HUNTER, JUNR."

The date was August, 1905. And the owners of the British names, our guide told us, were scientific men who had journeyed to Palma to witness the total eclipse of the sun. And in so doing they assuredly showed wisdom, for it would have been difficult to find a better place from which to observe the phenomenon than this wide roof that seemed so near the sky.

When the men essayed to climb the high tower I waited below on the roof, and was idly leaning over the battlements when a stonecrop fast-rooted in the interstices of the wall attracted me. Wondering what manner of plant would choose to live in that arid situation, I was examining it closely when I discovered that, even in that seemingly inaccessible spot, a caterpillar had found it out, and was busily feeding on its succulent foliage.

The caterpillar might be a common one—I have little knowledge of entomology—but it was new to me; and its appearance was so unusually gay as to appear to merit description. The body, which showed alternate stripes of light and dark grey, was girdled by black bands, which were further decorated by spots of vivid scarlet; while

the head—or was it the tail?—flaunted a double scarlet plume.

When the men again joined me, I drew the attention of the custodian to the gaudy insect, and asked if he knew the species.

He shook his head dubiously, confessing that he had never noticed one like it before. Then his eyes caught sight of the plant on which it fed, and he instantly brightened up.

"I know that plant," he said. "It is valuable, señora, very valuable. It makes a good medicine."

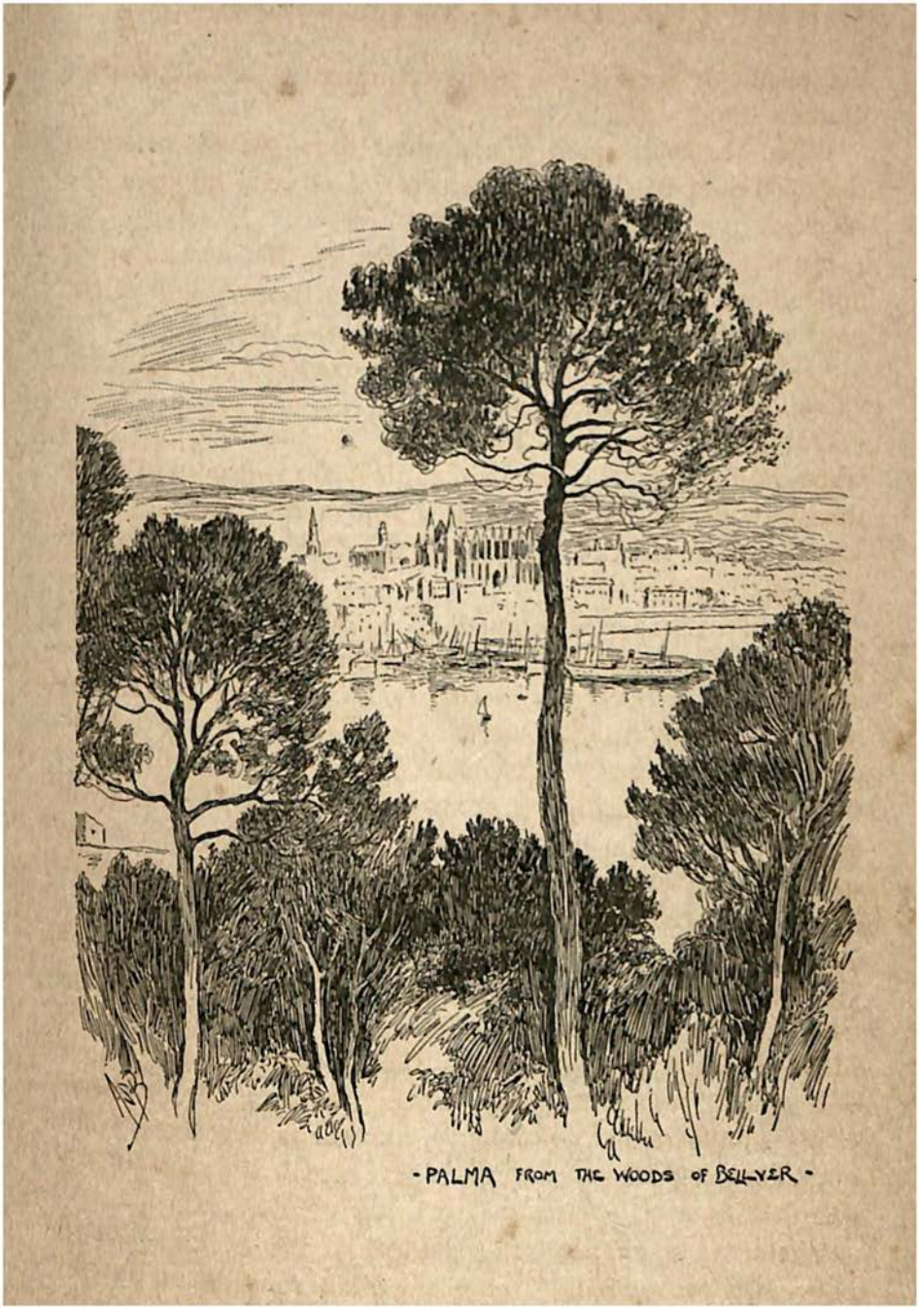
Our next visit was to the Lonja. In the good old days when Palma was a great mercantile centre—the days when thirty thousand sailors found employment from its port—a Majorcan architect designed the Lonja to serve as an exchange.

This old-time architect and his builders must have been past masters of their art, for though hundreds of years have slipped by since then, and the Lonja no more serves any active purpose, it still survives to delight by the simple grandeur of its design. Seen as it stands with only a wide thoroughfare separating it from the sparkling waters of the port, with its palm-trees in front and a cloudless blue sky overhead, the antique building is one of the most beautiful sights in a city that abounds in beautiful things.

We had been told that the Lonja was open to the public on the afternoons of Thursdays and Sundays. So one Sunday evening, early in our stay, the Man and I stopped in front of the great door, and tried to push it open. It did not yield a hair's-breadth. Indeed, it seemed to wear an expression of stolid immobility, as though secretly defying our puny efforts to induce it to reveal the treasures it guarded.

Sitting in a chair in the shadow of the building an old policeman was dozing. Him the Man roused and interrogated.

He shook his head over the idea of the Lonja being on view on stated days. But the Lonja was at the *disposicion*



- PALMA FROM THE WOODS OF BELLVER -

of the señor. The señor could see it on any day. He would fetch the keeper of the keys.

Toddling off across the square of the palm-trees, he disappeared, and in a few minutes returned, followed by that official, bearing the emblem of his office in the form of a massive key.

The great door opened and closed behind us, and we found ourselves in a vast square hall, from whose dark marble floor six noble pillars rose to meet the high vaulted roof.

Like the Cathedral, the Lonja was built of the warm, buff-hued native stone, and the marble flooring was also of Majorcan origin, for it was quarried in the mountains of the island. The materials used in the construction were the same; but while the Cathedral impresses by its solemn majesty of conception, the Lonja charms with its beautiful simplicity of design, its inspiriting sense of light and air. The four wide windows were partly boarded up, the light entering only through the open carving at the tops. Yet the hall was so well illuminated that it was easy to see every detail of the pictures that covered a great portion of the walls.

The collection of pictures, though of no great importance, one imagines might be better hung, better framed, and in some way catalogued. Certain of the canvasses lacked frames. A soiled card inscribed with the name of the artist was stuck in the frames of others. One portion of the wall-space was covered by interesting old paintings that had been removed from the antique church of San Domingo. And a large modern picture by a well-known Spanish painter attracted us both by the excellence of its workmanship and by the peculiarity of its subject: a bride and bridegroom—the man old, uninviting, and with strangely deformed feet; the woman young, attractive, and evidently of a lower social position—were standing before a brilliantly lit altar joining hands in marriage. On the bride's left stood her peasant mother, proud almost to arrogance at the wealthy marriage her pretty daughter was making. Behind were two workmen brothers, whispering and giggling.

The satire of the artist's intention was revealed in the title, *En el nombre del Padre, y del Higo, y del Espiritu Santo*, which was conspicuously painted on the frame.

High on the wall over the door that opens on to the garden two grotesque gargoyles look down on a finely sculptured bas-relief of the Virgin and Child. Across the little enclosure with its fruit-laden palm-tree, its tired-looking olive—how is it that olives always seem to pine for mountain slopes?—and its aloes, is a strikingly antique gate.

As the keeper of the keys pointed out, it was the original gate of the mole of the ancient port, and when in the seventeenth century the harbour was reconstructed, it was wisely deemed worthy of preservation. Behind it is the antique Concilio del Mar, which is now the Escuela Superior de Comercio.

Showing us a door leading to a staircase, the custodian suggested that the view to be obtained from the roof of the Lonja was fine.

He did not attempt to join our climb, and when we had mounted the eighty-two steps of the spiral stair we did not wonder that he had refrained. But the sight from the path which extended round the four sides of the square roof was wonderful. Each point of view held fresh interest—whether it was the harbour with the shipping and the shining sea beyond, or the grand Cathedral seen across the lively Marina, or the eight-storey-high houses, whose upper-floor dwellings opened to roof terraces or blossomed out in poultry-houses and dove-cots. But best of all, I think, was the vista of the road leading towards Santa Catalina, and the Terreno, and the Castle of Bellver, behind which the sun was setting.

· SECOND CLASS ·

VI

THE FAIR AT INCA

OUR first experience of the Majorcan railway system was a curious and unexpected one.

Having a fancy to see Inca, a thriving town situated in the very heart of the island, we called at Palma station one November day and asked for a time-table. The one handed us—it was the latest issued—bore the date of July, 1907. But even although it was well over two years old there appeared to have been no alteration either in the hours of departure or of arrival.

Learning that Thursday was the market-day at Inca, we got up before sunrise on a Thursday morning and reached the station in good time for the train that was timed to leave at 7.40. The *other* train, for only two trains a day leave Palma, was out of the question, as it did not start until two o'clock.

We had imagined that the paucity of trains argued a corresponding scarcity of travellers, but to our surprise the station was already crowded with a pleasantly excited mob of people, all in gala dress.

The women had their mantillas or lace-embroidered *rebozillos* fastened to the hair with little gold pins, and many wore long white gloves reaching to the sleeves, which were decorated at the elbows with a row of gold or silver buttons. The little shawls that are always a feature of native full dress were of all colours and materials, from silk with long fringes to richly-hued plush or delicate light brocades.

The trains of Majorca resemble those of most other civilized countries in providing first, second, and third-class carriages. The first are cramped and stuffy. The second are inferior to some old-fashioned uncushioned English third-class. The third closely resemble cattle-trucks with benches running along the sides and down the middle. They have no windows; leather curtains protect their open sides.

We went second-class, as did the majority of our fellow-travellers. Long before the hour of starting, every carriage, with the exception of the firsts, which were almost empty, was packed full of passengers, all talking at the pitch of their voices. But nothing happened until quite forty minutes after the time fixed for departure, when the engine gave a violent jerk, as though putting all its strength into a super-human effort, the women crossed themselves devoutly, and the train moved slowly out of the station. So slowly indeed, that three late-comers, arriving on the platform after the train was in motion, not only succeeded in entering the train but were able, by running forward, to secure places in the front carriages!

Inca is separated from the capital by twenty miles of fertile orchard land. The single line of rail cuts through great tracts of country planted with fig-trees, with almonds, and with olives. In many cases the ground underneath the trees was red and golden with autumn tinted leaves of grape vines, or verdant with the green of shooting corn.

As the moments passed, and the sun rose higher, the mist wreaths that had lain about the plain dispersed; and the blue hills to the north made noble background for the

spreading plantations. Within our crowded carriage all was good humour. Nobody seemed to find anything to grumble at in the slow rate of progress.

An early stopping-place was Santa Maria. We had only come a few miles, yet girls were waiting to sell nuts, and biscuits put up in neat paper cylinders, to those of the travellers—and they were many—who had already had time to be hungry; while an old woman carrying a water-jar and tumbler attended, ready for the smallest coin to supply the thirsty with water.

The little journey was hardly begun, and there seemed but small reason to tarry at Santa Maria, yet the delay became so extended that the passengers, still maintaining their perfect good humour, began exchanging visits from one portion of the train to another. An old gentleman clad in a complete suit of striped mustard-colour plush and yellow elastic-sided boots called at our compartment to exchange compliments with a comely elderly dame, who in conjunction with handsome jewelry had her hair—which was in a pigtail—covered with a gaily striped silk handkerchief.

So the minutes wore on. At intervals a warning bell rang, but nobody accorded it the slightest attention, and wisely so, for nothing happened. At length, with a joint-dislocating jerk, we again got under-way, only to come to a dead stop a hundred yards further on.

The train, it was at length admitted, was too heavy for the motive power. The empty first-class carriages were detached; that accomplished, we actually progressed. The twenty miles were ultimately covered, and we succeeded in reaching Inca, with its picturesque row of windmills and grand setting of purple mountains, only two hours late.

Joining the stream of people, we entered the town, to discover, what spectators less accustomed to crowds would long ago have discovered—that by some lucky chance we had come to Inca on the great day of its year—the annual *feria*. All the ways leading towards the centre of the town

were lined with empty vehicles and up-tilted carts, and in the narrow streets the owners were promenading.

The fair was largely a business matter. It presented few of the elements of entertainment common to that of an English country town. The only thing in the way of amusement that we saw was a merry-go-round, and that was being quietly ignored.

One interesting feature was that each street held its own species of merchandise. In one, clothing and brightly-hued foot-gear were sold. Another was wholly given up to sweet stalls, whose principal article was a species of white confection composed apparently of chopped almonds and sugar. That it was good the myriads of bees that were tasting its sweetness bore testimony. In yet another street we had to walk between a long double row of women seated on rush-bottomed chairs, each bearing in her lap an earthenware cooking-pot full of a puzzling commodity that had something of the appearance of crimson threads. It appeared to be the only commodity they had to offer, and I own we never succeeded in discovering what it was.

The square in front of the principal church was the centre of attraction for us. On one side the ground was covered with a fine display of native ware. Jars, and plates, and pots, and vases, in the greens and yellows and browns that look so tempting and are so cheap. The touch of vermilion, artistically so valuable to the busy scene, was given by the huge sacks bulging with scarlet and orange sweet peppers that form such an important part of Majorcan food.

Two maimed beggars, the first we had seen in the island, were hobbling about reaping a harvest; and, raised on a little platform, a travelling dentist was extracting juvenile teeth free; to the satisfaction of certain thrifty parents, and to the visible distress of their offspring.

Just below the square was the cattle-market; and on its outskirts we saw, for the first time, a peasant clad in the native male dress that unfortunately has become so rare. The jolly old fellow wore the extremely baggy blue cotton

pantaloons, the short black jacket, and wide-brimmed hat that make up so distinctive a costume. He even wore the quaint black shoes that suit the costume, and that seemed a blessed relief from the green and orange elastic-sided boots in vogue.

A threatened shower and an actual thirst gave excuse for seeking refuge in a café. Most of those we glanced into were crowded with peasants, and we hesitated about forcing

-A CORNER OF THE FAIR AT INCA-

our way in. Finding at last one that looked more exclusive than the others, we entered and seated ourselves at one of the little tables set under the overhanging tissue-paper decorations.

The Boy and I wanted wine, the Man chose cognac. The active waiter quickly served us with huge tumblers of red wine set in saucers; and placing before the Man a bottle of brandy in which were immersed spiky herbs, left him to help

himself. The wine was rich and fruity, the liqueur the Man declared delicious; and while the rain, which was now falling in earnest, pattered down, we sipped and watched the passing life of the street.

Just across the way, at the side entrance to a flourishing baker's shop, two women were frying dough-nuts in a big pan of boiling oil. The elder woman, scraping a segment of batter from the full basin at her elbow, deftly twisted it round her finger, then threw it into the oil, from which a minute later her assistant lifted it out with a long-handled spoon, transformed into a crisp golden ring.

The shower had ceased, the sun was again shining out, and there was much to see; so we paid for our drinks and departed.

"Fourpence!" said the Man, as he pocketed his change. "A penny each for the wine and twopence for the liqueur! It's enough to drive one to drink!"

The one drawback to the complete enjoyment of the fair was the mud. The previous night had been wet, and the streets were inches deep in it. It was a buff-coloured slime of persistently adhesive nature, and not content with thickly coating one's shoes, it tried to drag them off. To walk about in mud three inches deep is fatiguing, so we decided to take the train that was due to leave Inca at one o'clock, instead of waiting for that leaving at four.

It was a merciful fortune that guided us, for the one o'clock train took three hours to cover its twenty miles. Yet the scenery, with its grey-green olive plantations set against a background of beautiful mountains and enlivened with quaintly attired olive-gatherers, was so fine that we did not tire of feasting our eyes upon it.

Our companions on the return journey were mainly men—Palma merchants probably, who had visited the fair as buyers and were anxious to return with the greatest possible expedition. When those who were so adventurous as to wait until the later train would get back to town, or whether they ever reached it at all, history does not relate.

WHERE THE HILLS MEET THE PLAIN ESGLAYETA

VII

VALLDEMOSA

THE fertile plain that occupies the greater portion of the island of Majorca is sheltered from cold winds by the range of mountains that runs along the northern coast. The scenery on the farther side of the mountains is of unusual grandeur, the tracts of precipitous country bordering the sea between Valldemosa and Sóller being exceptionally lovely.

The district, which is almost entirely devoted to olive plantations, is a scantily populated one. And as there are no *fondas* for a considerable distance, the Austrian Archduke Luis Salvador, who owns much land on the northern coast, has turned a large farm-house on his estate of Miramar into an *hospederia*, or free lodging-house, for the use of travellers.

There are many *hospederias* in Spain, but they are

generally attached to monasteries and intended for the use of pilgrims to some shrine. That at Miramar is the only instance I know of one supported by a private individual, and many sojourners from far lands like ourselves must have felt grateful to the royal owner for the kindly provision he has made for them.

Within the friendly walls of the Hospederia any sojourner can for three nights find free accommodation, the Archduke providing house-room, linen, service, and fuel. The apartments are always ready, the guest need send no warning of his intended arrival. All he requires to do is to supply himself with food sufficient for the sustenance of his party throughout the visit, as there are no shops within several miles of Miramar, and the servants at the Hospederia are forbidden to sell to the guests.

Very early during our stay at Palma we had purposed journeying northwards to see the places of whose wonders we had heard ; but we were so pleasantly interested in our new home and strange environment that it was nearing the close of November before we felt disposed to take the journey.

At stated times diligences run the twelve miles between Palma and Valldemosa, and the charge is only sevenpence-halfpenny. But the diligence goes no farther than Valldemosa, and that is three miles distant from the Hospederia. So, when we had decided to go on the Tuesday morning, we engaged Bartolomé, a good-looking bachelor charioteer, who stabled his carriage and pair of horses in Son Españolet, to drive us thither.

But Tuesday morning, when it came, brought a sudden change of weather. A strong easterly wind was blowing, and the temperature, for the first time since our arrival on these favoured isles, nearly approached cold. Bartolomé was warned that the journey was postponed for a day at least, and we spent the hours of uncertainty in grumbling at the weather, and in consuming the most perishable of the stock of provisions we had laid in for the expedition.

Judging the Majorcan climate by our knowledge of that of

other countries, we were all secretly convinced that we had delayed too long, that the weather had probably changed for the winter, and that our little excursion might require to be postponed until spring.

But to our surprise and relief the succeeding morning proved calm and sunny. Having been duly instructed, Bartolomé drove up at ten o'clock precisely, with a jingling of bells that I am convinced set every feminine head in the Calle de Mas a-peer behind its discreetly closed venetian shutters. In appearance Bartolomé was the embodiment of buoyant geniality. His black hair curled in rings about his smiling face, and he had dressed for the occasion in a white suit, a pink shirt, and a pair of bright yellow elastic-sided boots.

Bartolomé's carriage, the sides of whose interior were decorated with four antimacassars on each of which was embroidered a flamboyant representation of a rampant steed, proved both roomy and comfortable, and we were only three in number. Yet when we had got packed in with our luggage, which included sketching materials as well as comestibles, there was scarcely room to stir. Never before had we realized what a cumbersome article food was: or calculated the bulk of—say—the bread even so small a family will consume in three days. And when you add to the loaves the meat and groceries, the vegetables and fruit, necessary for three days' moderate consumption, they will be found to occupy a surprisingly large amount of space.

The first portion of the journey led through the broad, fertile plain north of Palma, where plantations of almond, fig, and olive succeed each other with scarcely a break—that wide expanse whose fruitfulness has gained Majorca the title of the orchard of the Mediterranean. Near where the hills meet the plain we passed the village of Esglayeta, an attractive hamlet consisting of little more than a church and a wayside *fonda*.

The noses of the horses had been pointing directly towards a precipitous cleft in the range of mountains, and almost unexpectedly we entered the valley that divided two great

hills. As we drove on, the winding road gradually ascended, until we found ourselves in the midst of the mountains and within sight of the outlying portion of lovely Valldemosa.

In his *Byways of Europe* Bayard Taylor said: "Verily there is nothing in all Europe so beautiful as Valldemosa." And indeed the ancient town, rising on its heights amid still higher heights above the valley that runs seawards, is strikingly beautiful.

It is only when taking Valldemosa in detail that one notices that its people are not quite so handsome, that they lack the gracious and light-hearted bearing of the inhabitants of Palma, that their dress is poorer, and the streets more squalid. Perhaps the difference in climate may account for the difference in appearance, for Valldemosa stands high among the mountains, and its climate is both colder and damper than that of Palma. The situation is supposed to be extremely healthy. It was at Valldemosa, on the site afterwards occupied by the Carthusian monastery, that in 1311 King Sancho, who was afflicted with asthma, built a palace to which he removed his Court, and from which he gave his hawking parties.

At the suggestion of Bartolomé, we paused to visit the church attached to the old monastery, which was shown us by an elderly woman, who, unlike most of the country people, spoke excellent Spanish and understood our efforts in that language.

Under her guidance we visited the chapel, a fine old treasure-house of carved effigies of saints, of paintings, and of relics in glass cases all carefully wrapped up and labelled. The colours of the paintings that adorn the walls and ceiling, the work of two Carthusian monks, are as vivid as though still wet from the brush. And the remarkable altar-piece, with its life-size figures in wax, is worth a special visit.

Walking through the cloisters of the Carthusian monastery, we passed the doors of the cells, which are now used as dwelling-houses, and it occurred to us to ask if

our old woman knew in which of the cells George Sand had passed her memorable winter in company with her children, and with Chopin, and if it would be possible for us to see it.

Our guide appeared to be familiar with both questions. She had no hesitation in answering them in the affirmative; and preceding us briskly down the long, ascetic-looking corridor (that accorded so ill with our notion of Madame Dudevant), knocked at the door numbered 1.

"But if people are living in the house, will they not object? We must not disturb them," we demurred.

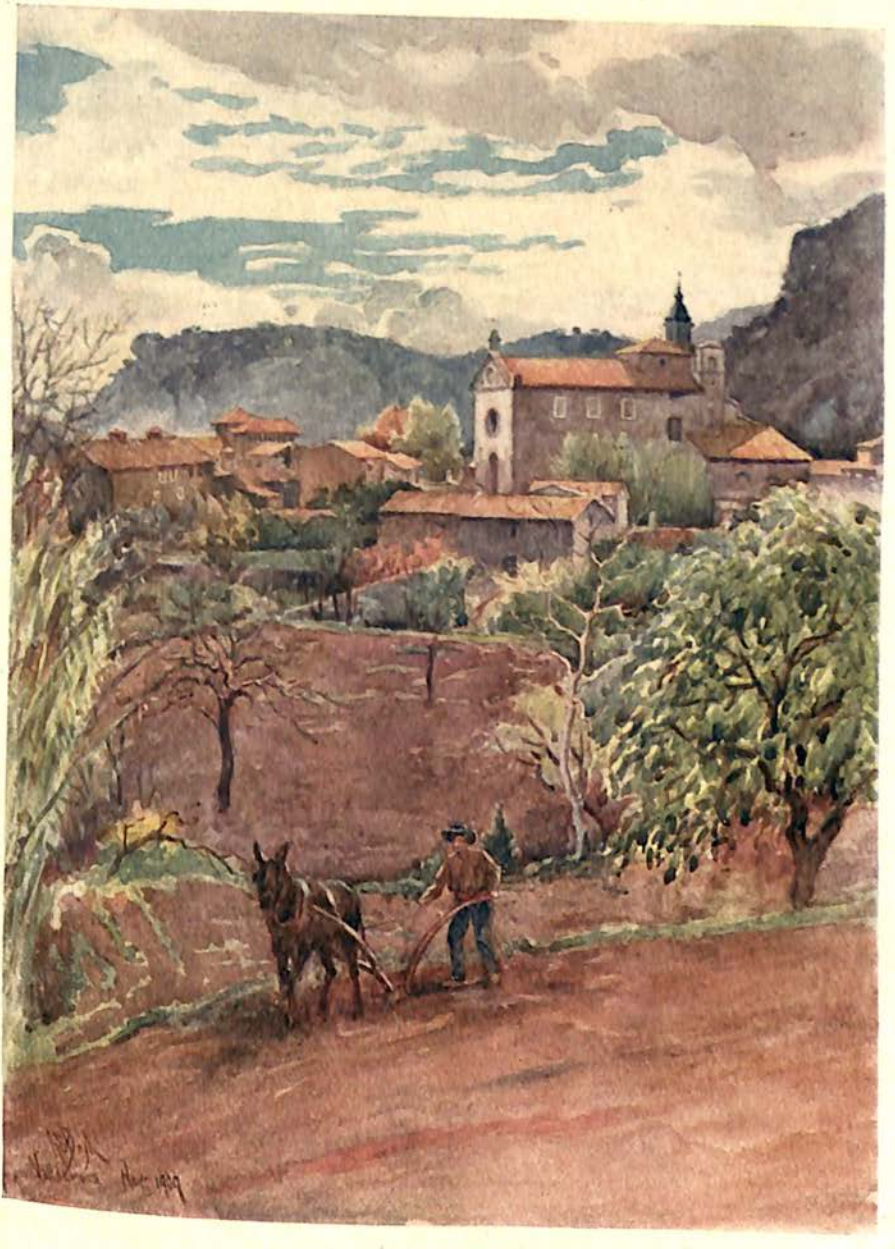
Our guardian thrust aside our protest as trivial, and in truth it was offered in a perfunctory spirit.

"No, no," she assured us. "The señor will be pleased. He is a nice gentleman. He was the doctor of Valldemosa for thirty years, till he retired. He will show you the house himself."

And indeed the señor, when he appeared, was graciousness itself. Welcoming us after the Spanish fashion, he put his house and what it contained at our disposal. In this case the courtesy proved more than a form of words, for he personally conducted us over all his domain.

First he showed us the terrace garden, from whose low boundary-wall, as from a balcony, one could look over the scattered houses that nestled among their laden orange-trees, towards the distant sea. The sun was shining; the air was heavy with the perfume of the loquat blossoms; a delicious languor lay over all. It was easy to imagine George Sand leaning on that wall, whose base was so thickly fringed with luxuriant maidenhair fern, revelling in the beauty of her surroundings. But my thoughts and sympathy were most with the monks who, on the suppression of the convents in 1835, were obliged to leave their quiet cells and the gardens that must have been a perpetual delight to them, and go elsewhere to subsist on the scant pension of a franc a day.

Taking us indoors, the doctor showed us the living-rooms, five of which looked out to the terrace-garden. The name



VALLDEMOSA

of "cell" suggests accommodation that is cramped and austere, but nothing could have been more cheerful than these sunlit chambers.

In the large, airy *salon*, with its domed ceiling, one could easily imagine both musician and novelist finding abundant space to work, he with his "velvet fingers," as his companion christened them, she with her facile pen. And in the quaint kitchen, with its range of charcoal stoves and big, open fireplace, one could picture them gathering on the nights of that cold winter.

It would have been impossible to find a more idyllic setting for a romantic episode. Still, I must confess that doubts assailed me; for in November, 1838, when writing to a friend, George Sand had said:—

> "I have a cell, that is to say, three rooms and a garden full of oranges and lemons, for thirty-five francs a year, in the large monastery of Valldemosa."

And this house of the doctor's, with its spacious *salon*, its large dining-room, its many sleeping-apartments? No, much though we desired it, the descriptions hardly tallied. Then in her account of the unusually severe winter Madame Dudevant wrote of the "eagles and vultures that came down to feast on the poor sparrows that sheltered in their pomegranate trees from the snow."

Now in the garden there was a *kake* tree laden with ripe rose-red fruit, and other trees, but no pomegranate. But then that was many years past, and the trunk of the pomegranate-tree might long ago have been burnt on that wide hearth in the kitchen.

Speaking of the matter to the good doctor, we found our uncertainty shared. Throwing out his hands he said humorously:—

"Who knows? There is no record. It was *one* of the cells. That much is certain. And this was the house of the Superior. If not this house, it was another. That is enough."

But as we descended the slope from the monastery we agreed that, whether or not the great French *artistes* ever lived within the walls of that particular cell, there could be no question that they had breathed the sweet air of these terrace-gardens, and had known the enchantment of that wonderful panoramic view. And that made their personalities very real to us.

Bartolomé awaited us smiling, and, insinuating ourselves among our medley of belongings, off we set along the three miles of road that led to Miramar.

On the outskirts of Valldemosa we saw, for the first time in Majorca, vines climbing over tall trees by the wayside, their grapes in purple bunches suspended in profusion from the branches. The effect was so beautiful that we almost regretted the more prosaic vineyards near Palma, with the carefully trained vines that resembled well-pruned blackberry bushes.

As we advanced, passing through a succession of olive plantations that rose above us towards the grand craggy mountains and fell beneath us to the blue sea, glimpses of which we caught over the foliage, the beauty of the scene that gradually unfolded surpassed all that we had yet seen.

The Man groaned a little, as during the next three days he was fated to groan often, and for the same reason.

"This is *too* grand," he said. "It's hopeless. One could never paint it!"

Turning a bend of the road, Bartolomé drew rein with a flourish before a quaint dwelling by the wayside; and we realized that we had reached the Hospederia.

"I say! We ought to have sent word we were coming. I hope the house isn't full. I hope they'll have room for us," said the Boy, voicing the sudden apprehension of us all. But so far from being crowded with visitors, the Hospederia seemed totally deserted. The great door was shut and, except for a vagrant cat and a clucking hen, there was no sign of life about the place.

Shouting lustily for "Fernando," Bartolomé jumped down and, running to the door, knocked loudly. Receiving no reply, he did not stand upon ceremony but, pushing open the door, went in, beckoning us to follow.

Entering, we found ourselves in a large outer hall with a cobbled floor and a long well-scrubbed table and benches. Following our charioteer, who had opened an inner door, we went into a large dimly-lit room which, when the window-shutters had been opened, revealed itself as a long narrow dining-room of severely ascetic appearance. Tables extended down its length, chairs with seats of interwoven string stood round the walls.

"Look, señora!"

Running to a cupboard, Bartolomé had thrown open the door, disclosing shelves laden with china and crystal.

Again—"Look! señora."

Hastening to the opposite side of the room, he had opened the doors of a big *armário*, and was pointing to piles of clean table-linen.

It was as though we had strayed into some enchanted castle where all had been prepared for our coming by invisible hands. Going off to explore further, we found our way into a snug kitchen. The whole of one side was occupied by a brown-tiled charcoal stove, on which many dinners could have been cooked simultaneously. The shelves were laden with cooking-pots and pans, of every description; the walls shone with an array of well-polished utensils. Over charcoal embers a huge earthenware pot, that for its better preservation had been encased in a strait-waistcoat of wire-netting, was slowly bubbling.

Essaying to mount the stair leading from the hall, we peeped into closely shuttered apartments in which we could see the dim outlines of beds. And what we saw assured us of one thing—that there were no other guests at the Hospederia.

From the perfect order of the house, and the fact that the fire was burning, it was clear that someone must be close at

hand. But we had come a long way, and in the meantime we were famishing.

Hastening to our aid, the ubiquitous Bartolomé spread the table, putting out plates and glasses, and finding wooden spoons and forks in the drawer of a side-table. Opening our packets of sandwiches and fruit, we invited him to join us.

We were all seated at table, busily eating, when a swift clatter of feet sounded on the cobble stones of the outer hall; and a brisk little brown woman ran into the room, voluble with apology for the temporary absence of the keepers of the Hospederia. Netta, she explained, was away. Fernando was working at the farm. In their absence could she be of any service to our excellencies?

Reassured on that point, the lady—Catalina was her name—remained to enliven our picnic lunch by rallying Bartolomé, who was an old acquaintance of hers, on his unparalleled effrontery in sitting down to table with us.

"You have no right to eat with their excellencies," she said. "You are only a coachman."

"But if he is a good coachman?" asked the Man.

"Ah, no, señor. He is not a good coachman. He is a bad coachman. And, besides, he cannot spread a table. See! he has given you no table-cloth, no napkins, when he knows the cupboard is full of them. No, he is a very bad coachman indeed!"

When our scrap meal was finished, Catalina proceeded to show us our sleeping accommodation. Unlocking a door that we had not tried, she led us through a pleasant room with two beds, to one with two windows—one facing the highroad, where Bartolomé's carriage still waited, the other affording a beautiful view of the rugged coast.

Catalina explained that these rooms were usually allotted to foreigners such as ourselves, the less attractively situated being reserved for natives of the island, who were at liberty to share the Archduke's hospitality; although the Hospederia was originally intended for the use of other travellers. A

handsome new dining-room in process of construction, though during our stay no one was actually working at it, was also planned for the accommodation of those from far countries, but to us the appointments of the older building seemed peculiarly in keeping with the quaint idea of the Hospederia.

The bedrooms were simply but sufficiently furnished. Each had two single beds, half-a-dozen chairs, a plain wooden table, and a tripod washstand holding the smallest basin and ewer we had seen outside France. The roofs were raftered. All was the perfection of austere cleanliness.

Before our inspection was ended Fernando, the host, a good-looking man with the gracious deportment of an operatic tenor, had returned. His grandmother had been the original housekeeper of the Hospederia. On her death, at the age of ninety-nine, her office had descended upon Fernando and his young wife Netta.

We spent the all too short November afternoon and evening in exploring the slopes about Miramar, looking at the glorious views that perpetually presented some yet more glorious aspect. The Hospederia was over a thousand feet above the sea, to which the ground fell precipitously. Above the house the land rose up and up until it ended in towering crags. Northward stretched the Mediterranean. Elsewhere the eye met nothing but range upon range of mountains.

The extensive grounds of Miramar are well shaded with olive and carob trees, but at every point that affords a specially good view of some part of the exquisite scenery the Archduke has caused to be erected a *mirador*, or walled enclosure, where one can sit in safety and glory in the beauty of the surroundings.

From one of these we watched the after-glow of the setting sun illumine distant peaks, bringing into prominence heights whose existence we had scarcely realized.

The darkness, falling swiftly, surprised us while a good distance from the Hospederia, and we had to find our way back by untried paths. But the fascination of the place held

us captive, and when the moon began to peep out from among the clouds we could not remain indoors, as more sensible folks would have done. Wrapping up a little, for it was colder on the northern coast of the island than at Palma, we went out, determined to reach a headland by the sea, on which from above we had caught tantalizing glimpses of a shining white temple.

Except from a *mirador* the temple was not visible, and we wandered by many devious ways before we again came in sight of it, perched above the sea on a high rock that is reached by a stone bridge thrown over a deep gully.

As we felt our way along, for the elusive moon was again behind a cloud, all was silent, mysterious. Surely Miramar at nightfall in winter is one of the most silent places on the earth. We felt as though there was not a human being alive but ourselves.

Crossing the bridge timorously, we found ourselves confronting the ghostly white chapel. When we had told Catalina of our desire to visit it, she had given us keys, but they did not fit. And as we proceeded to fumble with the lock, the silence was so intense that I could almost have imagined that someone within was holding his breath to listen. Had we knocked upon that closed door I had an eerie conviction that the spectre of some long-dead monk would have opened it.

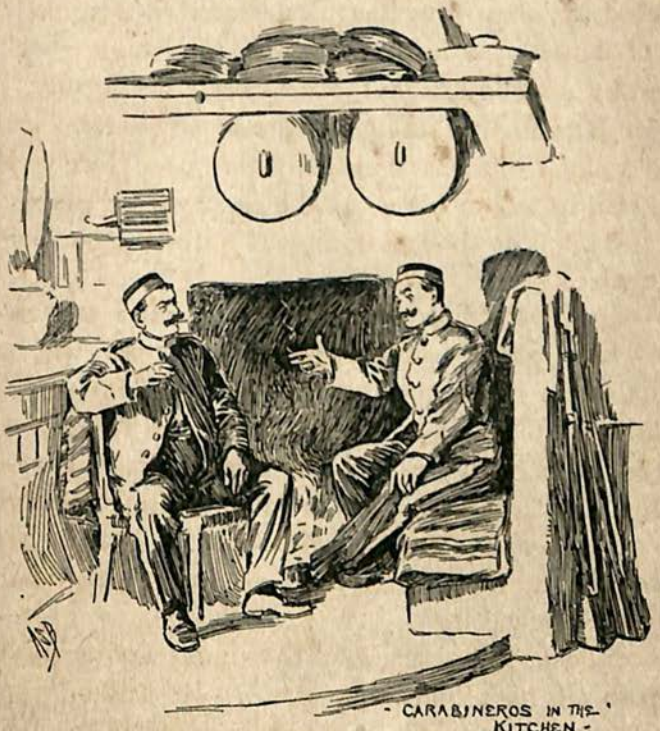
But we did not knock. And the moon favouring us with a glimpse of her illumining power, we walked round the base of the temple, which is securely railed in, and watched the moon outline with silver finger-tips each point and pinnacle of the hills and shimmer softly on the sea.

When we returned to the Hospederia, Fernando had gone to fetch his wife; and Catalina, who had been left in charge, bustled into the dining-room to tell us that two *carabineros* had come, and were resting in the kitchen.

"Have they come after us?" cried the Man; and Catalina, who enjoyed even the mildest of humour, wrinkled her brown face in delight.

The dining-room where we sat was large and dimly lit by oil lamps. After the silence of those wooded slopes the prospect of even the company of two *carabineros* was alluring. So when I went into the kitchen to cook the lamb cutlets and tomatoes that comprised our modest supper, my men followed me.

The kitchen, which was the most picturesque part of the



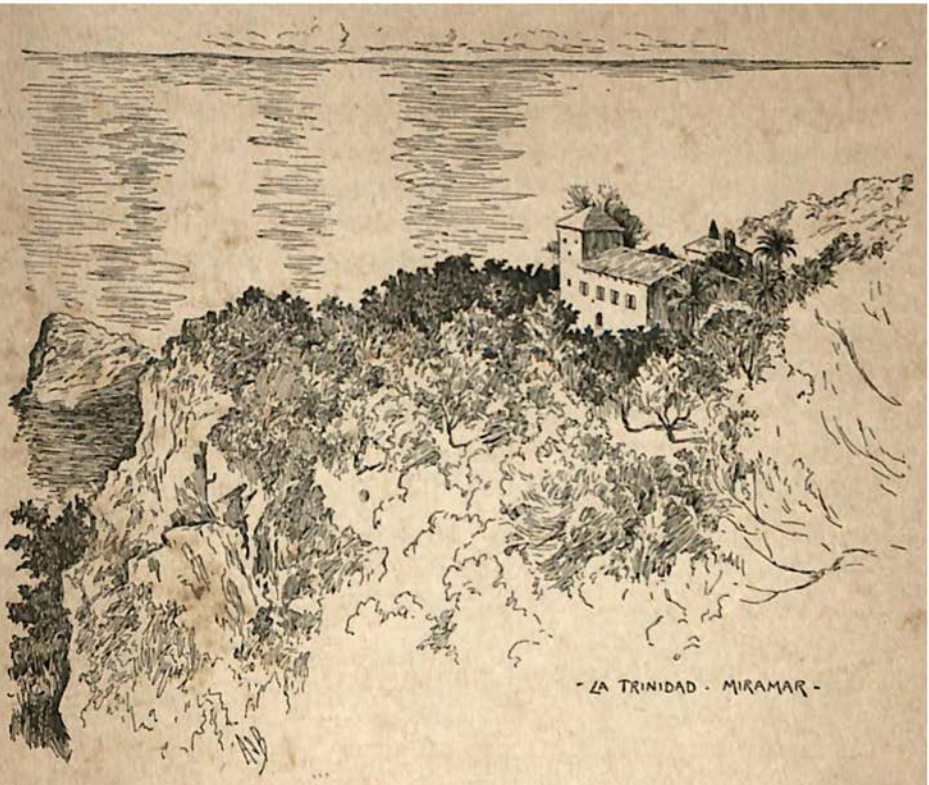
- CARABINEROS IN THE KITCHEN -

Hospederia, was looking particularly snug and cosy. A fire of logs burned on the open hearth, below the shining tin pans and the strings of red peppers, and lit up the fine bronzed faces of the *carabineros*, who sat close to its warmth.

They rose when we entered, to offer us their seats. One, spreading his striped blanket on the low settle, invited the Man to share it; and while I grilled the cutlets and Catalina washed dishes at the sink, the men chatted as freely as their

difference of language would allow, the *carabineros* talking of their long hours of duty—for their patrol begins at five or six o'clock in the evening and does not end until seven next morning—and of the constant watch that has to be kept for smugglers on that lonely and seemingly scarce accessible coast.

Leaving them to resume their night watch, we supped and went to bed, to be roused in the early morning by voices. Netta, the house-mistress, had returned, and thenceforward the lively Catalina would relapse into the position of merely an obliging neighbour.



VIII

MIRAMAR

WHEN we went downstairs to breakfast Netta was setting the table; setting it, too, after a fashion of her own which never varied, were the meal breakfast, luncheon or dinner.

First she spread the cloth, whose lack at luncheon on the previous day had so offended Catalina's sense of what was neat and proper. Then she put before each place a big tumbler, a little tumbler, two soup-plates, and a wooden spoon and fork.

Netta proved to be tall and nice-looking, with tragic dark eyes, and a gravity of manner that was in striking contrast to her husband's smiling bonhomie. She was an admirable housewife. We never caught her at work; yet, without the

slightest appearance of fuss and flurry, she managed to keep everything the pink of perfection.

The weather was hardly promising. Rain had fallen in the night; veils of mist smothered the crests of the near hills and completely obliterated the more distant. But we were resolved to let nothing short of an actual downpour keep us indoors. And as the Man wished to sketch at Valldemosa, which had captivated us all on the previous day, the Boy and I accompanied him thither. Perhaps it is unwise to attempt to renew first impressions. Possibly the charm of Miramar clouded our eyes to the undoubted beauty of Valldemosa. More likely the fact that the sun only peeped out fitfully, and that the wind was damp and the sky sullen, influenced our view: but somehow Valldemosa seemed to have lost the glamour it cast over us when we first saw it basking in the warm sunlight. Everybody seemed chilly, and all the children looked as if they had colds in their noses.

Leaving the Man working at a water-colour of the old Carthusian monastery from rising ground above a covered well, we set off with the intention of augmenting our little stock of provisions from the shops of the town.

The store we chanced upon sold every likely and unlikely commodity, from green and orange boots to radishes. When we inquired where we might find a butcher, the shop-mistress, with a majestic wave of her hand, signed to us to follow her. And, walking in her footsteps, we threaded our way through an apartment, which was partly kitchen and partly an overflow stock chamber, into an inner room, where hung garlands of black and yellow sausages and the carcasses of two lambs.

This was the butcher's shop, she announced, and there was no beef, only lamb. So perforce we added yet more cutlets to our diet, and humbly craved bread. But the only loaves she had were so large that, rejecting them, we went in search of a baker.

In the less important Majorcan towns, shops are difficult to find. The fact that a tax is levied upon signs keeps all but the most prominent vendors from exhibiting one. The

room of an ordinary house that opens directly to the street usually acts as the place of business; and a cabbage, or a basket of striped haricot beans, set casually on the doorstep, often serves to indicate the existence of a general shop.

After a little searching we succeeded in finding a *panaderia*, but the loaves of the baker, in place of being smaller than those of the grocer (which sounds Ollendorffian), were so huge that they resembled cartwheels, or, to be more exact, perambulator wheels, baked of rye.

For a moment the choice lay between possible starvation and the prospect of trundling the mammoth rye loaf up and down the three miles of highway that lay between us and the Hospederia.

While we hesitated, the baker lady, and the half dozen or so of her intimate friends who had followed us into the shop to see what the foreigners would buy, regarded us interestedly. Then a compromise suggested itself.

"Would it be possible to ask the señora to divide the loaf?"

"Yes—without doubt."

The complacent señora already had the large knife in her hand. So, clutching the half of the still steaming rye loaf, we returned to the Man, with whom we had arranged to share an open-air luncheon.

Before we had reached him, the mist that had been threatening to swoop down upon us resolved itself into a shower. Taking advantage of the near vicinity of the covered well, we boiled our tea-kettle under the archway, and drank tea, to the surprise of the people who were constantly coming to fill their water-jars.

Then, the sun consenting, rather sulkily, to peep out again, the Man returned to his work, while the Boy and I, feeling no further temptation to linger at Valldemosa, took up our section of the cartwheel and set off for Miramar.

On the way, not far beyond the outskirts of the town, we caught sight of a notice-board, which stated that a Museum of Mallorquin antiquities might be seen in a house

on the side of the road nearest to the mountains. Following the path indicated, we found ourselves, after a few minutes walking, in the courtyard of what had evidently been a fine old country seat.

The doors stood open to the world. Except for a beautiful flock of cream-coloured turkeys, the place seemed utterly untenanted. There was no sign of humanity until the Boy woke the echoes by smiting lustily on a cow-bell that hung outside the kitchen door.

Then a little sun-dried old woman popped her head out, and with a scared face fled up a broad flight of steps that led from the courtyard to the floor above.

She had gone to warn the custodian of the Museum; and that dame, quickly appearing, invited us upstairs to see the collection.

The house, Son Moragues, she told us, was one of the many owned by the Archduke on the different estates he had bought. He had never used it as a residence, and merely kept it as a receptacle for the specimens of typical Mallorquin manufactures, such as pottery, models of baskets, furniture, etc., he was collecting.

The object that interested us perhaps more than any other exhibit was a jar that had been salved from the sea in Palma Harbour. Although a genuine antique it was of the shape in use to-day; and its unrecorded period of immersion had left it encrusted with a marvellous decoration of barnacles and shells.

What really delighted us most in the Museum were the views from the balconies; especially those obtained from a great old *terras* with a sloping floor, where we stood in the brilliant sunshine and watched the showers sweeping along the mountain tops and up the valley.

Down below us was a thick hedge of prickly pear, the edges of the fleshy leaves ruched with scarlet fruit. And beside us, as we leant on the edge of the balcony, was a wire tray on which a quantity of figs, gathered presumably from the trees in the field beneath, were drying in the sun.

The quaint old garden, which we saw on the way out, had tall box hedges and a spreading magnolia, and crumbling stone seats surrounded the fountain, whose waters have long run dry.

In the evening I had gone to bed early, leaving the others to follow their own devices, and was sleeping the sleep of the woman who had been all day in the open air, when an insistent calling of my name aroused me back to semi-consciousness, and I gradually gathered that I must descend to open the door. The men, who had gone out walking in the moonlight, had returned to find that, inadvertently, the house door had been locked and barred against them.

Had my room been less accessible, or my sleep more profound, they might have knocked and called in vain, for although it was hardly nine o'clock, Fernando and Netta were deep in the slumber of the agriculturist in some unknown roof-chamber of the tall old house.

Although so isolated in position, Miramar is intimately connected with the romantic life-history of Ramon Lull—rake, recluse, scholar, fanatic, martyr, saint—what you will.

The father of Ramon Lull—the name is variously spelt: Raymund Lully in the English; Ramundo Lúlio in the Spanish; and Ramon Lull in the Mallorquin, which has a bad habit of chipping the ends off words—was one of those brave young knights of Aragon who fought with their King during his invasion and conquest of Majorca. When that war had ended happily for all but the Moors, the parent Lull, in company with the other nobles who had supported King Jaime the Conquistador, was rewarded with an estate in Majorca. And there, about six years later, his son Ramon was born.

During his earlier manhood Ramon gave little hint of what he was ultimately to become. His behaviour was by no means sedate. Nay, more, it is on record that his love affairs were so numerous as to become a public scandal, which reached a climax on his riding on horseback into church in pursuit of a devout lady whom he madly adored.

The fatal illness of this lady, by awakening his conscience and rousing him to a sense of sin, changed the current of his thoughts, and after a period of self-accusation and contrition, he decided not only to lead a better life, but to spend that life in the reformation of others.

King Jaime, on being applied to, supplied the funds necessary for the carrying out of his project, and Lull erected a college at Miramar, where close by the house of the Archduke a fragment of the original chapel is still to be seen. His scheme was to teach thirteen monks Arabic, so that they could go forth as missionaries among the infidels. And Miramar, one of the most secluded spots on earth, as well as one of the most beautiful, he deemed a suitable place for study.

But the scheme failed. Why, the chroniclers do not say. Perhaps the students, being merely human, wearied of the restrictions of existence in that seminary perched on the hillside between the mountains and the sea, and pined for company.

The project was abandoned. A later record speaks of King Sancho, grandson of the Conquistador, visiting Miramar in quest of relief from the asthma with which he was afflicted, and residing at the Arabic College.

Lull, nothing daunted by the defection of his pupils, alone put into execution his plan of carrying the truth into other lands. We hear of his preaching Christ in Africa and being rewarded with stripes. Then we are told of his travelling in the Holy Land. Later he appears in Paris, in Egypt, and even in England, writing books and teaching.

In spite of besetting dangers, Lull's life of study and propagandism lasted beyond the ordinary term of man. When he was an octogenarian, and probably weary of the struggle, he desired to quit the world in a blaze of glory; and, as the best means of attaining his end, returned to Africa, where earlier he had been received with contumely and severely beaten. There Lull met the fate he coveted: for continuing to preach openly and persistently, he was stoned to death at Bugia in June, 1315.

Some Genoese disciples who had begged for his bruised and broken body brought it tenderly back to his birthplace. We had seen the spot of its interment in the beautiful church of San Francisco, at Palma, a Gothic temple of the thirteenth century, that vies in antiquity with the Cathedral. One of the chapels in the transept to the left of the high altar gives sepulture to the aged martyr. The effigy shown is that of an old man lying on his side, as though to signify that his unwavering and indomitable spirit had at last gained rest.

We had spoken tentatively of Lull to Fernando, and Fernando had not only admitted a knowledge of the old-world frequenter of his slopes, but had volunteered to take us to visit his cave, a sanctuary high on the mountain-side above Miramar, where Lull was wont to go when he felt the need of seclusion. And at ten next morning we were waiting, expectant.

But at ten Fernando, just returned from his morning's work on the farm, was at breakfast. So we went to the *mirador*, below the Hospederia, and spent the minutes of waiting enjoying the view that, no matter how often we saw it, always wore a different aspect.

This morning, though the sun was shining on the sea and on the olives that covered the lower slopes, the higher peaks were obscured by filmy scarves of mist, and scarcely perceptible wisps were floating about the mountain sides, giving an air of mystery and grandeur to the lofty heights.

Then Fernando appeared wiping his moustached lips, which already held the inevitable cigarette. Under his guidance we moved along the highroad until we came to a gate where a cross fixed to the post betokened monastery ground. A sandalled monk passing by gave us grave greeting. There the ascent began at once, the path zig-zagging about on the terraced slopes that were thickly planted with olives. The undergrowth was bright with the vivid green foliage and brilliant scarlet berries of the winter cherry.

Up and up we mounted, Fernando and the Boy walking

lightly in advance, we others lagging a little behind, until we felt like birds seeking some mountain aerie ; till looking down we saw nothing but a steeply shelving forest of tree tops, or looking up caught a glimpse of mist-obscured crags.

The path wound about along narrow ledges and up crazy, almost obliterated steps, until with the suddenness of a surprise the track branched off to a ledge on the right, and we saw, set in the face of the solid rock, a little wicket gate.

It was so long since the gate had been opened that it necessitated a strong effort on the part of Fernando's broad shoulders before it would consent to open.

Within, the unexpected awaited us. Set in the wall of the cave facing the door was an old bas-relief carving that had evidently marked the place of the altar before which the saint had been wont to worship. The passing of the centuries has gradually blurred the outlines of the carving: still we could see the form of the Virgin and Child, and the worshipping figure of an angel. Behind the group was a background of palms.

The wall still held a faint trace of fresco, and from the side hung the socket—in the shape of a bird—for an antique lamp.

There was something so attractive, and even homely, in the cave, that we required no great effort of imagination to fancy Lull choosing it as his hermitage, and escaping thither when he yearned for a space to be free from the society of the thirteen monks who so soon had tired of their task.

That raised ledge might have served for a couch; this stone seemed the right height for a seat; a small window hewn in the side admitted sufficient light did the recluse wish to study. In the wall was a natural basin, which to this day, except when long-continued drought has dried up all the watercourses, holds a supply of fresh water.

It seemed to us that Lull had chosen an ideal place of seclusion in the rock-dwelling set far up in the pure air, where no sound save the twitter of bird or the far-off murmur of the sea could break the solemnity of his thoughts.

Everything about the cave bespoke its antiquity. The trees that fronted the entrance were hoary with age and fringed with lichen. And on the hill-side above, amidst moss-grown trees and blooming heath, a tall cross had been erected in memory of the recluse whose haven it once had been.

There was yet another cave that Fernando had promised to show us; one of worldly, not of religious uses this time. It was the place where in not very remote ages smugglers concealed the contraband goods that they had succeeded in landing on the coast below. So, leaving the cell of Ramon Lull, we followed our guide, clambering higher and yet higher, and speedily getting into the dim twilight of forests that might have existed since the beginning of the world, so venerable were they, so thickly mossed and festooned with grey-green lichen.

The signs of foliage were of the scantiest. Many trees revealed no more than half a dozen leaves set at the extreme tips of the lichen-furred branches. And all about was a huddled waste of stones—the debris that collects at the base of great mountains. In these gloomy recesses where daylight never enters there was no indication of life—no flutter of startled bird, not even a scurrying beetle. All was still and weird.

On hastened the light-footed Fernando, and on we followed more ponderously, marvelling how he knew his way where we could see no trace of a path. Suddenly branching off to the right, over the rough rocks, he preceded us to where, low down amongst a tumbled heap of boulders, a slight crevice showed. Smiling, he glanced back at us, then bent down and disappeared. Close on his heels the Boy followed. And both had vanished off the face of the earth, leaving us gaping at the mouth of the exaggerated rabbit burrow that had seemingly swallowed them up. We, wisely, did not attempt to enter. The prospect of a rough scramble did not tempt us.

On his return to the surface the Boy described the interior of the cave as both wide and lofty. But I must confess the idea of the smugglers conveying their illicit cargoes from the

beach all that distance up the steep mountain-side to store it in a cavern that was on the way to nowhere seemed absurd. It assuredly was inaccessible. And it spoke well for the vigilance of the carbineers that the *contrabandistas* could find no more convenient place of concealment.

But had Majorca not been free from the bandit plague, what a glorious place that would have been for brigands in which to keep prisoned the rich foreigners they were holding for ransom!

In some such unattainable holes and crannies of the heights must the mountain Moors have existed during the two years that passed before their chief surrendered to the Conquistador.

Just beyond the smugglers' cave were the fragmentary remains of a monastery, so old and long deserted that the lichen-fringed trees had rooted as deeply within the ruined walls of its chambers as without in the forest.

Still further we went, keeping close on the heels of our untiring leader, for the track sloped downwards now and the going was easier. Once more we were in the region of trees that seemed alive, not merely fossilized and moss-grown.

Like a born guide, Fernando had reserved the most charming part of the excursion to the last. All unexpectedly he brought us to where, on an outjutting pinnacle of rock, the Archduke had erected a chapel. From the stone seats placed round its base we had an enchanting and yet more comprehensive view than ever before of the scene that, from whatever point we chanced to see it, never failed to give us a fresh thrill of delight.

And wasn't I glad to sit down!

We had felt so much at home at the Hospederia and so enthralled with this new world of steeps and silences that, when the last of our three days had come, we felt sincerely sorry to leave it.

In torrid summer weather, when the southern plains of the island lie baking in the sun, it would be impossible to imagine a more charming way of escape from the heat than to rest under the shades of leafy Miramar, or to sit at ease in

one of the cunningly placed *miradors* "looking lazy at the sea" and the everlasting hills.

But the law is inexorable. When his three days' free lodging has come to an end each guest must move on to make room for others. A wise provision; for, had it not been so ruled, the first travellers who filled these beds and ate at these tables would never have left the Hospederia—they would have been there yet!

Our next stopping-place was to be Sóller, a town that is envalleyed amid the highest mountains in the island. Sóller is ten miles distant from Miramar, and the question was how we were to get transported thither. At the Hospederia we were quite out of the way of traffic. Not even a diligence lumbered by.

Fernando, coming to our rescue, offered to negotiate with a farmer for the use of a cart. It was the ploughing season, the busiest time of the year for both men and mules, but he succeeded in arranging that we could have the loan of a conveyance of some kind at two o'clock that afternoon for ten pesetas.

The morning had been wet. Happily not with the drenching, torrential rain of these latitudes, but with an insinuating moisture reminiscent of the Scottish Highlands. Disregarding it, we made the most of the few hours at our disposal, seeking, and finding, fresh walks and wonders in our surroundings.

One thing I remember that specially interested us in the terraced olive plantations of Miramar, was the method of throwing a little stone bridge from one walled terrace to another across the bed of the river. There was no water in the channel, the bed was dry and mossy. As we looked up at the succession of bridgelets, each flanked on either side by short flights of stone steps, it seemed to typify the extreme of the elaborate and painstaking system of culture that prevails all over the island.

With appetites sharpened by the famed air of Miramar we had lunched off goats' milk, the toasted remains of our half cartwheel of rye bread, and something I had confidently

expected would prove to be an omelet, but which turned out to be something entirely different. It was eatable, however, even delectable, and we devoured it to the last yellow fragment, then waited the arrival of our carriage.

It came at last. And as it drew up in front of the Hospederia we looked first at it, then at each other, in silent dismay.

In place of the roomy farm cart drawn by mules that we had expected to see, the conveyance was one of the gaily painted, two-wheeled cockleshells in which Majorcan farmers go a-junketing. It would have been an admirable vehicle for two people. Viewed as a means of carrying four with luggage, it at first sight seemed absolutely impracticable.

"Oh, it's all right; I'll walk," said the Boy, regardless of the fact that ten long miles of wet road lay between us and the Hotel Marina at Sóller.

Our luggage was as little as a party of three could be expected to require during a week's expedition, comprising as it did only one large portmanteau, a suit-case, some sketching materials, and a couple of rugs. Yet compared with the size of the conveyance it appeared of enormous dimensions.

Nothing daunted by the overwhelming bulk of his prospective load, the driver put the suit-case under the seat, propped the big portmanteau up on it, and invited me to get in. That done, allowing a modicum of space for himself, the carriage was full.

Obviously that plan would not do. Again we looked at each other in despair. Fortunately the driver was a man of resource. Hauling out the big bag, he wrapped it in a sail-like canvas cover, and, producing fragments of rope from all his pockets, proceeded to tie it on at the back of the cart. Running into the house, Netta brought more rope for its better security. With the load hanging behind, it seemed as though the tiny vehicle were already overweighted; but its capacity for endurance proved greater than we anticipated. The Man got in, the Boy got in, the driver also mounted.

All three were jammed into a narrow seat for two. I was squeezed in somewhere at the back, and at last our journey began.

As we drove on the feeling of insecurity lessened; we forgot to expect the cart to tip up. Our mule proved himself a good goer, and we early learned to adapt ourselves to conditions—to lean forwards going uphill, to incline backwards when the way led downwards.

Though the mist still blurred the mountains the coast scenery was magnificent. The road, which lay half-way between sea and mountain-top, was bordered on either side

by olive plantations. About three miles from the Hospederia it curved inwards into the most beautiful valley I had ever seen.

Houses that looked like nests, so thickly were they surrounded by luxuriant foliage, were scattered about the lower parts of the hills that on three sides rose steeply; on the fourth the land declined gently to the Mediterranean.

Here there were no jealous walls to hedge in the gardens. Oranges, lemons, and figs in full fruitage overhung the highway. Tall palms rose overhead, and down by a fountain women were washing. It was the village of Deyá, a sleepy

nest seven miles from even a diligence, but, even seen through a blur of rain, a place of exquisite beauty.

"We must come back here."

"Yes, we'll come back——"

"And stay a month," we agreed, as we had done about so many charming spots that we had got just a glimpse of, and as we were fated to do about so many more before our sojourn in these lovely isles came to a close.

We would gladly have lingered to explore the beauties of Deyá, but the delay at starting had already encroached on the November afternoon, and the greater portion of our journey was yet to come. So the men, who had got down to walk through the village, remounted, and once more, huddled up together, off we joggled, out of the lovely valley and along a cliff-road where, among the grey-green olive-trees, girls in skirts of vivid scarlet were gathering the fallen fruit.

It was five o'clock and dusk was already falling when we descended the zigzag road leading into Sóller and, passing a picturesque old cross, turned into a modern-looking street planted on either side with trees.

"What I want to see now," I said, deliberately shutting my eyes to the scenery, "is a hotel with electric light, and a good fire, and German waiters, and French cookery."

"Don't be hateful," retorted the Boy. "But it doesn't matter; you won't see it. My only fear is that they won't be able to take us in."

The rain, which was now falling more heavily, had sent the townsfolk indoors. The only wayfarer in sight was a venerable gentleman who, as he sat astride a panniered donkey, protected himself from the rain with a large umbrella.

Turning with a final jolt, we drew up in front of the Hotel Marina, whose wide glass doors opened hospitably to receive us.

There was no question of lack of room, fortunately, but the dinner-hour was yet two hours ahead, and even the satisfaction derived from the omelet (which wasn't really an

omelet) was already a vague memory. But we are people of resource. While I boiled the unfailing tea-kettle the men foraged, returning with provender in the shape of crisply toasted *biscochos* and *cocas*, and we had a cosy tea that enabled us to possess our bodies in patience until the dinner-hour.

The waiter who served us was German, the cookery revealed more than a suspicion of French influence, the electric light was brilliant, and there was a cheery fire. But even the Boy did not complain.

IX

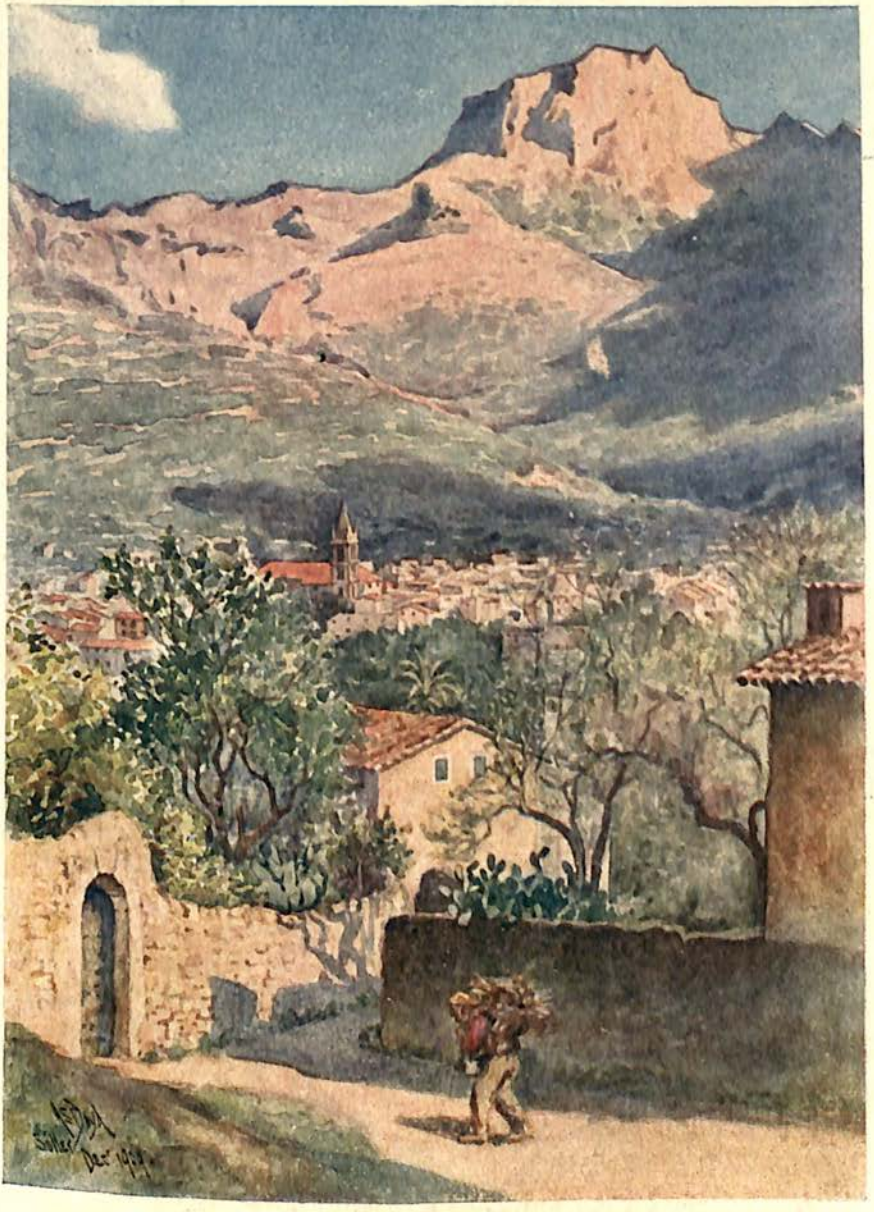
SOLLER

THOUGH a longer acquaintance reveals many charming and wholly Majorcan characteristics, at first sight Sóller resembles a Swiss town, so closely do the high mountains encircle it. The likeness is emphasized when, as occasionally happens in winter, the double crest of the Puig Major is tipped with snow.

With the exception of Palma, Sóller was the only Balearic town in which we had slept. Half unconsciously we found ourselves putting them in comparison, to discover that while each is, after its own fashion, delightful, they are entirely dissimilar.

Palma, "compactly built together," stands, crowded a little, within its city walls, its feet lapped by the sea, a fertile plain behind it, while Sóller stretches itself at ease among its hills, with abundant elbow-room, in a fruitful orange grove. Water is a precious thing in Palma, where drinking-water in quaint Moorish stone jars is hawked through the streets, while a striking and refreshing feature of Sóller is the abundance of running water. It flowed—a little sluggishly perhaps, for the rains had not yet come—over the stony bed of the *torrente*; it gushed unchecked from the street fountains; it ran along cunningly contrived stone conduits and turned mills.

There are no rivers in Majorca. The beds of the *torrentes* that ought to be rivers are often so dry that they resemble rough sun-baked roads. It was so many weeks since we had



SÓLLER

seen even a thread of running water that the sound of its flow was music in our ears. As a full and free supply of pure water is essential to the well-being of a town, one easily understands how Sóller has the advantage of Palma in health conditions. The absorbent soil of Sóller ensures freedom from rheumatism, and the old people remain hale and hearty to the close of lives that in many cases come within nodding distance of a century.

Perhaps it was owing to the absence of the military, or the want of a railway—though Sóller has one in the making—or of the close vicinity of a port, but to our cursory view Sóller appeared less gay, and its people seemed to lack the irresponsible smiling light-heartedness of Palma folks.

There were architectural differences also. To enter one of the better-class houses in the larger city one crosses a *patio*, or open courtyard, and having ascended a stair, knocks at a door; while in Sóller one steps directly from the street into a large hall, on either side of which, close to the wall, are set a long row of chairs all of similar design. Here visitors are received, and, as far as we could judge, penetrate no further.

Sóller has few of the flat roof-tops or windows that are so prominent a feature of the old Moorish capital, but Sóller has more chimneys; in the stillness of early morning the faint blue haze of wood fires overhangs the town.

Our first day at Sóller opened dull and grey. Much rain had fallen in the night. The streets were damp, the mountains mist-shrouded. The Boy and I felt depressed and cross. The Man, who had already discerned picturesque possibilities in the unique situation of the place, put a sketch-book in his pocket and went off in search of a typical subject. The Boy and I prowled about the narrow streets, allowing ourselves to be annoyed at everything—at the mud, at the Sunday crowds, and at the way they stared at us.

In the square before the church was a busy little market. At the corner of the square, near where one gets a lovely view of the *torrente* overhung by the balconies of crooked

old houses, some of the ramshackle vehicles that convey marketers to and from the port of Sóller were waiting.

"Let's go and have a look at the port," proposed the Boy. "Those people look at us as if we were wild beasts. And it will be better than hanging about here in the mud."

The shower that had been threatening all the morning was beginning to fall, so I agreed. Selecting the coach that seemed on the point of starting, we took our seats. A young couple, an old couple, and half a dozen market baskets overflowing with greenstuff, shared the interior with us. Three more people and several more baskets mounted to the box, and, just as the rain began to patter heavily on the canvas roof, we drove off, glad to have secured the temporary shelter.

The way from Sóller to its port seems to lie through an orange grove, so closely is it flanked on either side with gardens full of the shining leaves and golden fruit. It was sad to learn that a blight had attacked the crop in the lower part of the valley, and to see in one orchard a heap of trees, plucked up by the roots with the fruit still thick on the branches, waiting to be burnt.

As we drove slowly along we met many country people townwards bent to mass or market. Long usage in sunshine and shadow had streaked the original hue of their great cotton umbrellas with broad lines of lighter tint—lines that until one guessed the cause looked like elaborately decorative stripes.

By the time we had reached the entrance to the land-locked harbour the rain had ceased. Fitful gleams of sunshine broke through the clouds, and the air was soft and pleasant.

Except from one point of view the natural harbour resembled a quiet inland lake. There was no sign of the near proximity of the sea. To the left rose a bold headland crowned by a lighthouse. To the right was a long sweep of bay lined at the farther end by a row of houses, before which

small craft lay at anchor. Swart fishermen in red caps and yellow boots lounged by the doors of the cafés.

Just beyond the houses the steamer *Villa de Sóller*, that makes periodical trips between the port, Barcelona and Cette, was loading boxes of the oranges for which the district is famed. Farther on was a second lighthouse.

Climbing the steps that rose steeply between the two rows of houses, we reached the summit of the rocky promontory. Rusty cannon, their work long over, lay at rest in front of the old chapel that crowns the eminence. Before us lay the placid land-encircled sheet of water, behind us was a wall. Glancing over, we discovered, to our surprise and pleasure, that instead of the country landscape we had somehow expected to see, the ground fell sheer down to where the purple-blue Mediterranean ceaselessly surged beneath.

The unexpected transition from the peaceful inland lake surrounded by mist-flecked mountains to a precipitous coast was curiously interesting. A moment earlier, with the moisture-laden air blowing softly in our faces, we could have imagined ourselves in the heart of the Scots Highlands. Now, by the mere turning of a head, we were gazing across a great tideless sea.

A capacious coach, in which we chanced to be the only passengers, conveyed us back to Sóller and deposited us at the door of the Hotel Marina, where the Man, who had spent the morning sketching on a mountain-slope, was waiting to join us at luncheon.

The town was busy when, later in the day, we made a tour of inspection, finding fresh interest at every turn. A row of bananas rich in pod, a group of quaint old-world houses, a great palm rearing its stately head, its thick clusters of orange-red fruit stems heavily beaded with shining yellow fruit.

There was leisure in the air. It was evidently the visiting hour. In the entrance halls, in full view of the passing public, comely dames sat chatting all in a row, like the pretty maids in the garden of Mary-Mary-Quite-Contrary.

To us it always seemed odd to see the gossipers seated side by side in a formal line—a position that one would imagine was not conducive to the exchange of confidences.

The suggestion of French influence in the architecture of certain of the newer houses was explained by the fact that when natives of Sóller leave the island to seek their fortune they rarely go further than France—an easy journey with the *Villa de Sóller* sailing at frequent intervals from the port to Cette. And when the exiles return—as they invariably do, for the emigrant Majorcan's sole desire is to make money that he may settle in his own country—they naturally import some of the ideas and tastes of the nation with which they have sojourned.

French influence, too, was noticeable in the way the women dressed their hair. In many instances, particularly among the younger women, the pigtail and the *rebozillo*, or head-handkerchief, had given place to an elaborately dressed coiffure.

All night the full moon had illumined a sleepy world. When I looked out at six o'clock it was still visible, though the light of the hidden sun was already flushing with roseate tints the highest mountain-tops. Over the valley the azure smoke of wood fires lay softly, and the sweet, sickly fragrance of steaming chocolate was in the air.

The valley was still partly in shadow when after breakfast the Man went out to resume work. Leaving the Boy to his own devices, I went with him.

The country immediately surrounding Sóller is so full of roads all beautiful, and paths all picturesque, that it is often difficult, even for those who know the district well, to find the way they look for. After a little winding in and out of the twisted streets we came upon the expected road—a track leading upwards towards the olive terraces.

From the steep slope where we sat it was curious to watch the progress of the sun as it rose over the mountain-tops to note how, as it climbed higher, the shadows shortened,

the moist streets dried, the chill vanished from the atmosphere, and new shadows crept over the sunlit sides of the surrounding hills.

Beneath us ran the *torrente*, and from the roads on either side of its banks came the sound of wayfarers entering or leaving the town. The air was full of cheerful sounds, of the rattle of wheels, or the tinkle of bells and the bleat of lambs as a flock was driven by. The atmosphere was so clear that we caught the swift musical note of a church clock, and the sound of a gunshot reverberated among the hills like a peal of thunder.

The few passers-by gave us kindly greeting. Two old women returning from market, a bevy of young girls on their way to gather the fallen olives, an old couple trotting briskly beside their panniered donkey—all had time to smile and wish us "Good-day."

As the sun became stronger I rose and wandered on, up the steep, cobbled road, past the gardens where the oranges hung golden, looking for wild flowers. Even in the days of late November one rarely looks in vain for wild flowers in Majorca; and this morning, strolling along by the runnels of water, where the delicate maidenhair fern grew in profusion, I saw twining about the ivy berries in the hedge a lovely creeper that was new to me.

Set at regular intervals on a slender brown stem, it bore clusters of glossy green foliage and drooping florets and buds. The blossoms, which had four petals, were cream-hued and flecked inside with crimson. It was a dainty and distinctive trailer. Even in its natural state it were difficult to imagine a more graceful wreath. A passer-by of whom I asked its name called it *Sylvestris montana*, and volunteered the information that, though it luxuriated on dry walls, no one could succeed in inducing it to grow in gardens.

Following the path as it wound about the side of the hill, I found myself by easy stages rising high amid the olive terraces There were silver-white olives beneath me, silver-white olives above me. The voices of the invisible gatherers

mingled harmoniously with the music of the running water. A soothing sense of peace lay over all.

I think it was then that I fell in love with Sóller.

There are places that at first sight you are entranced with, and in two days find you have exhausted. Sóller is decidedly not one of these. At the close of the third day of our stay in the hill-encradled town we felt as though we had hardly yet had more than a glimpse of its beauties, so many and varied are they. It is said that you can stay at Sóller for two months and go for a different walk every day—and I believe it.

From the first waking moments, when one could see the rising sun illumine the hill-tops, until, with its sinking, the grand crest of the Puig Mayor—the Greater Peak—was garbed in celestial glory, the day was a succession of artistic delights.

Sóller had for us an added charm in the companionship of congenial fellow-visitors—an English lady who appreciates the beauty of the place and the homely, good qualities of its people so highly that she spends long periods there, and an enthusiastic young artist from the Argentine who, with the world to choose from, elects to paint at Sóller.

Under their guidance we had driven to Biniaraix and, alighting, mounted the *Barranco*—a wonderful path by which the peasant proprietors reach the olive-trees that their untiring care in the preparation of the stony soil and their skill in husbandry have persuaded to grow on every possible —and, one might almost add, impossible—ledge of the rocky steeps.

The Barranco, which was like a series of low, broad steps, zigzagged between the mountains like some eccentric, never-ending staircase. As we went up and up we paused often to look down to where, deep in the valley, Sóller lay embowered in its orange gardens. And while we climbed we marvelled at the ceaseless industry of a race that is willing to expend so much time and toil to reap so small a return.

On the following afternoon we drove to Fornalutx, a little antique town three miles from Sóller. Fornalutx is

the point from which expeditions start to climb the Puig Mayor.

The little town, which is built from the warm, amber-brown stone of the hill-side on which it perches, is very old. There does not seem to be a yard of straight street within its bounds. The houses are set down pell-mell, anyhow and anywhere. A delightful lack of uniformity reigns supreme. An orange orchard pokes itself in here, a vine trellis projects there, a flight of steps interjects its crooked way at every corner.

And it is all pictures!

The Painter, who knew the place, reflecting our pleasure, hurried us on to see a good subject, and another good subject, and yet another.

THE MANDOLINE PLAYER

As we passed up a quaint side street the tinkle of mandolines fell gratefully on our ears, and we paused before the open doorway from which the sound issued. Green branches and tissue-paper frills decorated the entrance; within, some sort of merrymaking was in progress.

A group of pinafored urchins who were hanging about outside told us that it was the *fiesta* of the master of the house.

It was rude, inquisitive, and wholly inexcusable, of course, but, incited thereto by curiosity, we drew nearer and nearer until we could see into the room which opened directly from the street, and wherein a young girl and a grey-haired man were seated, mandolines on knees, playing a duet. They performed without music but in perfect harmony.

The girl, who was dark-eyed and pretty, was attired gaily in honour of the festivity. She wore a red skirt, a pale-green

bodice, and an elaborately embroidered white apron. Blue ribbons adorned her well-oiled hair, silver bracelets and rings decorated her slender wrists and skilful fingers. The man was evidently her father. In the background we got an impression of guests and of a presiding matronly presence.

With a final flourish the melody ceased.

"Bravo!" we cried, and clapped our hands.

It was no longer possible to ignore the presence of the impertinent foreigners. Indeed, it almost seemed as though the sociable Majorcans welcomed the opportunity of recognizing our uninvited appearance. For, as we turned to go, the mistress of the house hurried out, a hastily vacated chair in either hand, to urge us to enter, and would take no refusal.

Within, the guests had rearranged themselves. Retiring further into the room, they had left space for us. It would have been discourteous to reject the hospitality so unaffectedly offered.

Our little party was soon grouped inside the doorway, and the father, whose *fiesta* it was, laying aside his mandoline, seated himself at an old piano, and the concert began afresh, the daughter playing the mandoline to her father's accompaniment on the venerable instrument. The company, which included two priests, smoked as it listened appreciatively.

On the centre table was a liqueur-stand, two decanters of red wine, and a large round dish holding a giant *enciamada*. When the music ended and we rose to go, the hostess advanced carrying the liqueur-stand, and, doing the honours with an ease of manner and dignity of bearing that might have adorned any social rank, she insisted on pouring out a little glass of *aniset* for each of us. Having drunk to the health of the hero of the *fiesta*, we made our farewells and departed, delighted with this chance glimpse of placid and happy home-life, and wondering what manner of reception a party of curious intrusive foreigners who disturbed the peace of a family gathering would have met in our own conservative country.

That afternoon at Fornalutx was fated to be one of those

that stand clearly out in the memory, not because of any special adventure or of any great occurrence, but simply because it held a succession of captivating little incidents, of happy chances.

Passing down a narrow street of steps we came upon an old house whose wide outer court tempted us to enter. Exploring, we found ourselves in an olive oil factory. In the inner chamber a patient mule, his eyes blindfolded by having miniature straw baskets tied over them, was walking sedately round, supplying the force that crushed the olives, and from the press the oil was gushing in streams that went to fill the vats underneath the floor.

On the outside wall of the post office a caged bird was singing cheerily. Next door was the prison, but that cage was empty. The barred window of its cell opened breast-high on the street, but spiders had, undisturbed, woven webs across its bars, and the key stood in the door. Evidently malefactors are scarce in the quaint hill-town.

Leaving the crooked streets, we strolled up the side of the *torrente*, which flowed amidst orange orchards and by the sides of picturesque houses. Pomegranate-trees, their dainty foliage flecked with autumnal gold, had rooted in the high banks by the water, and the unplucked rose-red fruit had already supplied many a luxurious meal for the birds. Were I a bird I would elect to build my nest at Fornalutx, for there I would be sure to find an abundance of good food. Figs bursting with ripeness hung on the trees, and all around were oranges, and vines, and yet more oranges.

Far up the precipitous hill-path, at a point so high that it afforded a glorious view of Sóller, we came upon a farm-house known to our friends.

The occupants, greeting us kindly, took us into the most curious kitchen imaginable. Goatskins covered the ceiling, and in the centre was a place where seats encircled a charcoal brazier—a Majorcan "cosy corner," where the household could sit and snugly toast their toes, when storms blew snell about the mountains and rain obscured the valley.

The garden space in front of the farm-house had been turned into a great bower by a huge vine that, trained along a trellis, cast over it a pleasant shade.

It was late in the season—the last day of November—yet a few glorious clusters of grapes, the berries all golden and pink and wearing a bloom unmarred by touch of hand, hung

AT FORNALUTX

heavy from its branches. Here another instance of native generosity awaited us, for the housewife, resolutely refusing recompense, sent us away laden with bunches. As we descended to where the carriage waited we must have presented something of the appearance of the returning spies that Moses had sent out to view the land of Canaan.

The sun had set when we reached Fornalutx. Looking up from the crooked street towards the hills we saw the peak of the Puig Mayor stand out against the darkening eastern sky, sublime, magnificent, bathed in a flood of roseate light. It was a fitting climax to a day of quiet delights.

We had entered Sóller wet and weary on Saturday night, knowing no one within many miles. When, on Wednesday afternoon, the diligence bound for Palma called at the Marina to pick us up, people of four different nationalities assembled round the coach door to bid us "God-speed."

We would fain have lingered amid the oranges and palms of Sóller, but time was flying and we had much to see elsewhere.

The diligence was full—so full that there would hardly have been space for an added thimble. It was our first experience of a Majorcan diligence, and we were interested to see how pleasantly the already closely packed passengers squeezed together to make room for new-comers, and to note how quietly they all sat, without fidgeting, with scarcely a change of position, during a drive that lasted over four hours.

The window in front and those at the sides were shut, and remained so throughout the journey. Fortunately our seats were by the door, and through its big window, which we kept open, we had a splendid view.

The highroad from Sóller to Palma is, I verily believe, one of the most curious ever made. Immediately after leaving the town it has to ascend 1,500 feet, which exploit it accomplishes by zigzagging at acute angles to the summit. That done, it zigzags down the other side.

The progress uphill was necessarily slow, so slow indeed, that the driver, who had traversed that road daily for thirty years, left his sure-footed mules to guide themselves, and trotted along behind the coach smoking the eternal cigarette. And, while we revelled in the ever-varying views afforded by the constant change of direction, our fellow travellers gently dozed, with the exception of a round-eyed little girl, who, oppressed by the glory of her first hat and the excitement of her first journey, kept wide-awake.

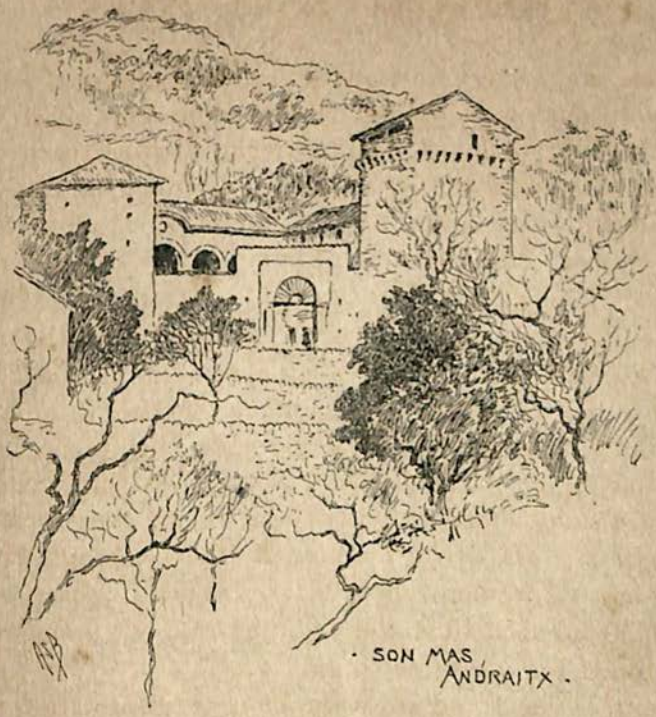
Up we went, every moment revealing some fresh effect of light and shadow in the enchanting mountains, past where the embryonic workings of the new light railway scarred the hillside. Up we went and up, catching little glimpses of the town nestling far beneath in its cradle of mountains, and seeing the last flash of sunset illumine their crests. As we mounted slowly the somnolence of our fellow passengers became more profound, and a portly father who was seated beside the little girl, to her evident alarm, lurched farther and farther in her direction, threatening altogether to efface her. The Man was on the point of going to the rescue, but the coach having reached the old carven cross that marks the summit, a sudden and vivifying change came over our manner of progress. The driver remounted the box beside the two motionless old women, whose black-shrouded figures we had seen silhouetted against the light, and off we set, at a pace that atoned for our crawl uphill.

The more rapid motion wrought a transformation on our companions. All the slumberers awoke. The portly gentleman, simultaneously opening eyes and mouth, gazed down in astonishment at the child, as though during his doze she had materialized out of nothing. Lively expressions lit up the blank faces. The little old man in the corner began softly chanting one of the quaint native songs, that to me always sound like improvisations.

It was already dusk when we stopped to change our three hardy mules at a wayside *fonda*: and the lights of Palma were sparkling through the December darkness when we drew up at the city gate for the *consumero's* inspection.

During our days of absence the gay little city seemed to have decided that winter had come. The soldiers had donned their heavy coats, and men were going about muffled in great cloaks: but leaves were still thick on the plane-trees in the Borne, and to us the air seemed still soft and pleasant.

A few minutes later we were entering the Casa Tranquila with that feeling of absolute contentment that return to one's own home alone can afford.



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ANDRAITX

A HAPPY fortune more than good guiding led us to Andraitx. The Boy, painting at the port of Palma had seen the diligence, stuffed within with country folks and top-heavy without with their bundles, start with a gay jingle of bells for that little-known town, and was seized with a desire to visit it.

Somewhat precipitately we engaged our seats in the following day's coach, and then proceeded to make inquiries about the place. Nobody, it seemed, had a good word to say of it, perhaps because no one went there. Baedeker scorned even to mention its name. There was only an inferior *fonda*, one informant said. There was no *fonda* at all, amended another.

The diligence left Palma at two o'clock, and the fee for the

30 kilometros—over 20 miles—was two pesetas. Taking only a light suit-case, we locked the doors of the Casa Tranquila that glorious December afternoon, and walking down, reached in good time the little back-street café whence the coach started.

Several passengers were already in waiting—a pleasant-faced old man and his comely wife in native dress, sundry peasant women muffled in shawls, one or two men whom the mistress of the café was serving with lunch. A little pile of luggage—bundles tied in brilliant kerchiefs, and market baskets—littered the floor. As we waited, more passengers arrived and more. We were glad our places had been secured.

At five minutes before two the mail-bag appeared; and at ten minutes past, the diligence rattled down the narrow cobbled street and pulled up at the door of the café. It was a cumbrous and yet cramped vehicle lined with clean striped cotton.

The slender mail-bag having been deposited in a hollow seat, the Man and I hopped briskly in and secured the places on either side of the door, which had a wide window, arguing away our consciences' accusation of selfishness by the excuse that we were probably the only passengers to whom the scenery would be new. Then the nice old country couple came in, followed by a huge matron with a little son; and a pretty young girl took the seat next to me. An old dame, who, in spite of the heat, was muffled into a living mummy, mounted beside the Boy on the box. The country women were packed into a hooded cart that was waiting to receive the overflow, the driver got up in front, and we were ready to start. It was already half an hour after starting-time, but we delayed until a nice little boy, attended by two juvenile shop-lads clad in overalls of check cotton, appeared to join us. As fitting preparation for his four-hour journey in the stuffy interior of the coach, careful relatives had enveloped the urchin in a heavy top-coat and wound a thick muffler round his neck. He was

hauled into the coach, his luggage, which consisted of two large round bundles neatly tied in gaily striped handkerchiefs, went to swell the mound on the top, and off we set at last, only to halt at the bottom of the street to admit a woman of such appalling dimensions that she seemed to prove what the Boy declares is the Majorcan rule with regard to diligences—that they first fill them quite full, and then add a couple of the fattest people procurable.

Clambering ponderously in she subsided with a flop between the other massive matron and the pretty girl. "Caramba!" exclaimed the pretty girl, and the journey began in earnest.

Palma was brilliant in sunshine. Looking back as we crawled up the heights towards the Terreno, it glowed like a jewel in the strong sunlight. The sea was a vivid azure. Beyond the opposite shores of the bay the distant isle of Cabrera showed distinctly.

As the road wound onwards in and out, we got glimpses of fairy-like inlets of the sea, of beautiful caves and tiny bays all sparkling in the sunshine. As we passed the hotel at Cas Catalá a German waiter appeared to get the newspaper from our driver, and we felt glad that our journey ended in a place where German waiters were unknown.

Turning from the sea, the road passed among rocky slopes crowned with pines and olives. Amid the stones we caught sight of rosy heath and of great clumps of lavender rich in purple blossom. It was on this beautiful sloping country-side that the first great battle was fought between the troops of King Jaime and the hosts of the Moorish Amir. The fighting was severe; and, though the victory was his, the chroniclers of the period tell how the brave young King of Aragon wept when he learned of the loss of two nobles, brothers, who had been boon companions of his own. A tapestry in one of the chambers of the Casa Consistorial at Palma gives a pictorial rendering of the scene. And under a large pine by the wayside, nearly half-way between the capital and Andraitx, is a monument—a simple

iron cross set on a stone pedestal—commemorating the valour of the Spaniards who lost their lives to help to free the Christians.

When the way was uphill, and the coach lumbered slowly along, slumber crept over the passengers. When we again reached the level and the pace quickened, everybody awoke, and conversation became general; at least, as far as the native element was concerned. The Man and I yearned for a knowledge of Majorcan when the two plump ladies, whose tongues were their only active members, took turn about in relating what were evidently incidents of dramatic interest.

Once or twice, when the road ascended some specially steep slope in zigzags, the coach stopped, and most of us got out and, crossing the hill by a short cut—we followed those who knew the way—rejoined it on the farther side. Needless to mention, the only two dames whose absence would have made any appreciable lessening in the weight remained fixtures.

The two points of difference between Majorcan and British travellers that we had noticed on the drive from Sóller again impressed us. One was their quiet demeanour. They were not restless, they never fidgeted. They sat quite still, their hands placidly folded—except when a little gesticulation was necessary to adorn a tale. The second, which was even more unlike the British of the same class, was that though the journey was one of about four hours' duration they had made no provision for it. Even the small boy, or the little child, had not so much as a sweet or a biscuit to break the monotony.

When, half-way, we stopped to change horses, the old man, who had been pleasantly interested in the feminine gossip, stepped lightly out, and returning with a large tin mug of water, handed it round. It was the pretty girl who, when it came to her turn to drink, gracefully declined the privilege in favour of me, saying, with a wave of her hand, "Ah, no! The señora first."

The way was wild and romantic. Only at long intervals was there a house even by the road-side. Just at dusk we passed several open carts crowded with young olive-gatherers returning from work—a gay band, shouting and singing. After that the night appeared to fall suddenly upon the earth, and the new moon, a bright star poised above her, shone in the sky.

A second diligence, starting from some other point, had joined us; and as we moved slowly along in company, the two lumbering heavily-laden coaches and the covered van, the little procession had something of the aspect of a party of emigrants travelling in quest of a new home.

When the mysterious beauty of the half-lights had vanished, and the night gathered, we began to wonder why we had left the Casa Tranquila, where we had been so comfortable. We had no special reason for coming to Andraitx; there was no attraction to draw us thither. And even now we did not know if there was any place where we might sleep.

Just before we entered the town the coach stopped a moment and the Boy came round to the door.

"I've been consulting the driver," he said. "He recommends a place where he says we'll get the best cooking in Andraitx."

"Is it an inn?" we asked.

"No, I don't think it's exactly an *inn*, but the man has been a cook. His house is at this end of the town. The driver says he'll stop there if we like. Will that do?"

It was quite dark now. We were cramped and tired, and the refuge that wasn't exactly an inn was at least near. We agreed that it would do.

Three minutes later the diligence drew up in front of an open door, through which the light from a good oil lamp streamed into the blackness of the street.

"This seems to be the place," said the Boy. "But it's a shop!"

There was no opportunity for hesitation. Our luggage

was already on the pavement. Turning to a tall, bearded man in a white apron who appeared in the doorway, we asked if he had accommodation.

Yes, he had room, he replied; would we enter?—and, following him, we found ourselves in a wide, airy shop. On one side were shelves filled with delicacies. On the other were three great wine barrels. And on the floor stood the usual assortment of hampers and open baskets containing fruits and vegetables.

At the back of the shop, sandwiched between it and the kitchen, was a neat little dining-room. And when we had been ushered in there the Boy, as our spokesman, proceeded, after the custom of the country, to ask terms—"What would be the charge for board and lodging, wine included, a day?"

Our host hesitated. He was an exceptionally nice-looking man and spoke beautiful Spanish.

"The terms? That would depend upon what one had. He could make any terms that suited, from one peseta and a half a day. But for four pesetas—*then* he could do us really well."

A bargain was quickly struck. We were to pay three pesetas and a half a day, wine and the little breakfast included; and our first meal was to be served as soon as it could be prepared.

After a short stroll through the dark streets, and not a little conjecture concerning immediate happenings, we returned to our lodging. The glass doors of the little dining-room opened on to the shop, its window looked to the kitchen, where our host was already busy over the stove. The sound of quick footsteps overhead suggested that rooms were being prepared for our reception. Her parents being engaged, the shop had been left in charge of the daughter of the house, a pretty, dark-eyed child of seven years old.

She made a charming little picture, as she sat amongst the scarlet *pimientos* and the yellow lemons waiting for custom. And when a younger child, carrying a quart bottle,

entered to buy a pennyworth of wine, the business-like way in which she placed the funnel in the bottle, and filling the measure from the barrel poured it in without spilling a drop, delighted us. As also did the accustomed way in which she dropped the penny into the table-drawer that served as till.

Before we had time to grow impatient our hostess, looking like an adult copy of her child, appearing, spread the table neatly with clean linen and shining crystal, then set before us a dish of rolls, one of olives, and small plates of spiced sausage and ham. Then the host entered carrying a bottle of a good brand of imported claret that he had taken from his shelves, and a syphon of seltzer.

We were nibbling at the appetizers, trying to restrain ourselves from making a meal of them, when an excellent soup was served.

"If I could choose, I know what I'd have next—a big fat omelet," the Boy said, as he finished his plate of soup. And on the thought, as though in answer to his wish, the landlord entered bearing a fine opulent omelet stuffed with green peas. When we had eaten that, he was waiting to replace it with a dish of delicately browned veal cutlets, savoury potatoes fried in butter, and more green peas. A sweet course is so rarely served in Majorca that it was a pleasant surprise to find the cutlets followed by a mould of the native preserve, *membrillo* (quince) jelly, and pastry turn-overs. The dessert consisted of a pyramid of mandarin oranges cut with stems and leaves. It was a surprisingly complete meal to be served on an hour's notice in the back shop of a little unknown out-of-the-world town.

The rooms allotted to us comprised the whole floor above. The *salon*, which was to the front, had two handsome wardrobes—wardrobes would seem to be as often placed in sitting-rooms as in bedrooms in Majorca—a chest of drawers, several comfortable chairs. The beds, with their lace-trimmed and monogrammed linen, were perfection. As we fell asleep we blessed the happy chance that had led

us to so much more comfortable quarters than we had anticipated finding.

Breakfast, of French chocolate and hot buttered rolls, served to confirm the good impression of the previous night.

The ambition of my infancy—to keep a little shop—threatened to return as, from the stronghold of our neat little dining-room, we watched the life of the shop, a portion of whose trade appeared to consist of barter. First a woman entered with a basket of glowing sun-kissed pomegranates which she exchanged for macaroni and other groceries. She was quickly followed by a man who had a hamper of lemons and a bag of the scarlet waxen pods of the sweet pepper to dispose of.

While the chocolate was still in process of consumption our host, courteously solicitous respecting our comfort of the night, waited on us, his tall, slender form begirt with an apron of spotless purity, on which was also embroidered the family monogram.

From our concerns the conversation naturally passed to his, and with the simple friendliness of the Majorcan he told us his life-story. Told how, like most of the Andraitx lads, he had early left home to seek his fortune, but while most of his companions had become sailors, he had chosen to make cooking his profession. A course of years passed as a *chef* in Havanna and other places had gained him the nest-egg he desired. Returning to his native town while still a comparatively young man, he had taken this shop, married to his liking, and settled down in comfort.

There was neither sun nor wind. The air was calm and cool. It was a splendid day for exploring a new locality. But Andraitx was still a sealed letter to us. We did not even know what to look for.

When we arrived on the previous night the town had been shrouded in darkness. So it was a charming surprise after we had mounted the commonplace street to find that in situation Andraitx resembled a miniature Sóller. Hills,

some crowned by windmills, enclosed it on every side. Passing through the market square we climbed the eminence on which perched the quaint old church, and looking back, saw the town lying in the hollow beneath us; and to the north-west, its mouth guarded by sentinel hills, the wide inlet of the sea that marked the port.

Within the church, gloom and silence held possession. A little distance off was the walled cemetery. Leaving an environment that threatened to depress us, we scrambled down the farther side of the rocky incline, and, finding a path, followed it.

The path, chosen at random, passed in front of Son Mas, a quaint old building whose tower bore signs of great antiquity. The place was evidently now in use as a farm-house, and the tenant, seeing us pause to look in through the wide gateway, came out and cordially invited us to enter.

He was a fine specimen of the handsome, robust sons of that gracious soil. His sun-tanned skin and workaday garb seemed at variance with his courteous dignity of manner, which admirably became the resident of so ancient a mansion. He appeared to feel a special pride in his surroundings and did not scamp the showing. Through the wide courtyard, and up the central staircase that led to the balconies, and through the deserted rooms he escorted us.

The tall square tower that now formed part of the house, he told us, had in older times been used as a place of refuge by the Christians during the attacks of the piratical Moors who infested the coast—a stronghold to which they fled when news reached them that the heathen marauders had entered the port and were advancing towards the town. Would we like to see it?

Would we not! Following our leader, we passed along more corridors and over floors aslant with age, till he stopped before the entrance to what was probably the smallest winding stair ever devised for the passage of human beings.

Up that very stair, our guide assured us, had the Christians fled to seek safety in the tower. And as we timorously mounted the narrow steps we agreed that the Andraitx early Christians must have been the leanest of mankind. For one plump Christian in a hurry would assuredly have brought destruction on all the rest by sticking in the first bend of that pitch-dark winding staircase.

We emerged, dusty and breathless, into a square room whose window framed a magnificent view over the town and the wide fruitful valley to the shining waters of the port beyond.

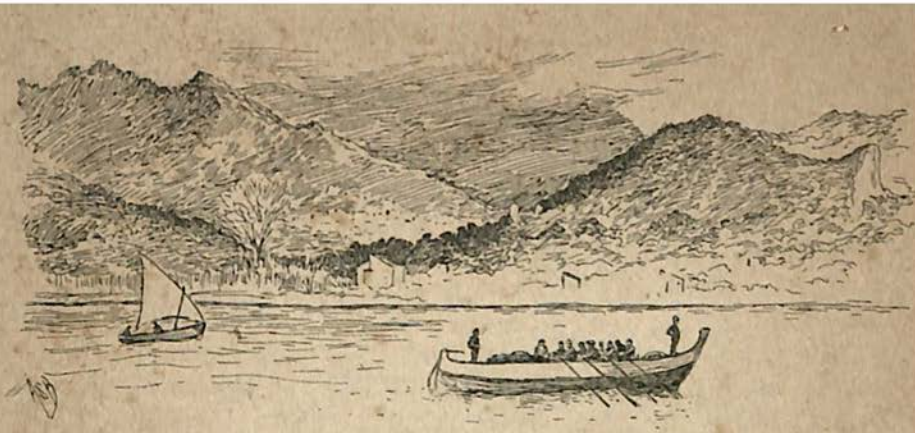
In one of the walls was a groined cavity that had been a shrine. And close beside it was the now walled-up doorway that, when the tower stood apart, had been connected by a drawbridge with the main building.

On the dusty floor in a corner lay some curious earthenware retorts of a primitive date. The vessels had been found in an old cabinet in company with a quantity of unknown drugs—presumably the stock of some long-dead alchemist. Scientific men, hearing of the discovery, had hastened to carry off the chemicals, the farmer told us, leaving the earthenware behind.

All the acquisitive Briton in us yearned to possess one of the quaint retorts. It was only the thought of their bulky brittleness that conquered the covetous feeling.

From the room more pigmy steps wound upwards to a roofed *mirador*, but, as the inner walls of the staircase were broken away in great gaps, only the Boy was daring enough to ascend.

Returning, he reported a low roof that sloped down to battlemented walls pierced with loop-holes through which arrows and boiling water were wont to shower down on the besiegers. On one occasion the captain of the Moors was killed with scalding water thrown from the tower. To the present day the incident affords matter for intense satisfaction at Andraitx.



IN THE PORT OF ANDRAITX

XI

UP AMONG THE WINDMILLS

WHEN at noon we returned to the shop our host had a delightful little luncheon awaiting us. And it was in high good-humour with him, with ourselves, and with all the world, that we set off to walk the three miles of level road that lie between the town of Andraitx and its port.

Every foot of the way was full of interest. At first it led past rustic dwellings set in their orange and lemon gardens. In one orchard a life-size, and life-like, male scarecrow was perched high up in the branches of a pomegranate-tree. Then the road ran for a long way close by the dry bed of a *torrente*, that in the rainy season would be a river, and through groves of almond and olive-trees before it reached the wide stretch of fruitful plain devoted to the culture of vegetables.

Our path was cheerful with wayfarers. As we strolled along, a succession of old vehicles and picturesque folk passed us. Old men in suits of faded blue cotton, bright-hued handkerchiefs bound about their heads under their wide hats, trotted by beside their panniered donkeys. And dotted over the rich, red earth people were busy. In one

field a man was ploughing, while close on his heels a handsome dark-eyed woman in a scarlet petticoat followed, dropping yellow peas into the newly turned furrows.

Everybody within hailing distance gave us kindly greeting. Even an infant, whose age might have been reckoned in months, from where he was snugly seated in a basket, clearly echoed his parents' "Bon di tenga," much to our amusement and to the frankly evident delight of his father and mother.

In the rich, moist soil of that sheltered valley we thought we had discovered the mould in which the gross eighteen-inch radishes are grown. Perhaps it is the nature of that alluvial plain that accounts also for so plentiful a harvest of mosquitoes. Certain it was that they positively swarmed, and that being quick to detect a new and, I trust, delectable flavour in foreigners, they paid us particularly insistent attention, escorting us even to the port, and out on the breakwater that cuts across the inlet, and makes snug haven for the fishing craft and for the few cargo *pailebots* that anchor in the port. It was fortunate that, unlike those of the Palma mosquitoes, their stings proved harmless.

We had brought tea-things with us, and leaving the Man sketching, seated on a mast that lay under the sea-wall, the Boy and I took the empty kettle, and set off in search of water, and of the men's constant need—tobacco.

The sign over the door of the only shop in the place showed that it was authorized to sell the tobacco that is a Government monopoly of Spain. Going in, we found ourselves in a long, low-ceilinged apartment that might have served for a type of a smugglers' den.

Several people of both sexes were within. From without we had heard the gay clamour of voices, but with our unexpected entrance all seemed stricken dumb. The woman who had been sweeping out the brood of adventurous chickens stopped short, broom in hand, as though turned to stone. The girl mixing something in a bowl paused to stare. The men ceased their loud discussion and gathered in a silent band to learn our business.

We were not altogether unaccustomed to pointed attention. That very day in Andraitx our appearance had aroused something of the interest accorded in an English country town to a circus procession. But the silent scrutiny was distinctly embarrassing. The Boy is rarely abashed, yet his voice faltered a little as, in Spanish, he asked for cigarettes, naming a good brand. On learning that they were not in stock he asked for others, and yet others, lessening the monetary value of his demands until he reached those cigarettes that retail at seven for a halfpenny. But even these were not to be had. "Then what was for sale? Any brand would do."

Hard pressed, the authorized vendor of Government tobacco confessed that he had none in stock.

"But this is the Government tobacco shop, and you are all smoking—what on earth do you smoke, then?" demanded the Boy.

There was a momentary hesitation; then—"We all smoke contraband tobacco, señor," he made reluctant admission.

"That's good enough for me," said the Boy, and with a relieved expression the shopkeeper disappeared to return with a three-ounce packet of smuggled tobacco, for which he charged sevenpence-halfpenny And vile though it undoubtedly was, the buyer declared that it was vastly superior to that usually sold with the sanction of the Spanish powers.

When, bearing the full kettle and the contraband tobacco, we sauntered back to the breakwater, it was to find the Man the centre of an interested crowd of boys. And all the time we waited an engrossed audience surrounded us. Even the appearance of a longboat, rowed by what to our eyes seemed a crew of pirates, so picturesque was their garb, failed to divert a tithe of the attention.

Apart from its beauty, the port of Andraitx impressed us as being the least prosperous place we had seen in Majorca. The houses were poor and huddled together. And the population seemed large in proportion to the probable increment. As one of the natives put it, "the fishermen

are many and the fish few." The village lads, fine stalwart fellows all of them, were woefully patched as to attire. Majorcan women are marvellously dexterous with the needle. Their patches are so neatly inserted as to be works of art; but until that afternoon at the port of Andraitx we had never encountered patches that threatened to usurp the entire groundwork of a garment.

We had heard of the existence of an official known as the "Captain of the Port," yet, one man being as dexterously mended as another, failed to distinguish him among the loiterers about the pier. At length a gentleman with side whiskers, taking up his stand behind the Man, bowed ceremoniously to me, silently raising his time-worn hat.

"Buenos dias," I said; in my desire to be affable forgetting that it was already afternoon.

There was a momentary pause. Then, "Buenas *tardes*, señora. Buenas *tardes*," he corrected, in a tone of gentle reproof.

And I decided that in spite of his plenitude of patches, his total lack of waistcoat, and his dilapidated buff slippers, the gentleman who revealed so refined a desire for exactitude of speech must be the Captain of the Port.

It was on the morning of our second day at Andraitx that we decided to go to Arracó, a little town about half an hour's walk farther north.

When we spoke of going our host suggested our branching off from the road and climbing the hill of the windmills to see the view. Antonia, his little daughter, would accompany us to show the way. And in a trice Antonia was pronounced ready for the excursion. Her head was bare, her feet were encased in smart yellow boots, and in the pocket of her red frock there were stowed away, as provision for the journey, a roll and a diminutive black-pudding.

It was a lovely day—sweet and peaceful. Even after two months' experience we never seemed to become accustomed to the consistent urbanity of the Majorcan weather, and each successive perfect day brought a fresh surprise.

The road was a beautiful one. Once beyond the outskirts of the town it passed between slopes luxuriant in almonds and olives. Here and there the falling golden leaves of a pomegranate made an aureate glow on the red-brown earth. Perched high in an olive-tree by the wayside a man was pruning its branches.

For the first ten minutes Antonia was demurely silent. Then, as her shyness wore off, her horns appeared. She was a charming imp of seven, the adored of her parents, who knew her variously as Anton, Antonia, and Antonetta. Anton, in a tone of reproof when she was caught pulling the hair of a friend, Antonia when she was ordinarily good, and Antonetta on the many occasions that they found her particularly adorable.

She went, apparently only when she had got nothing more interesting to do, to a convent school, where she was, with exceeding reluctance, beginning to learn Spanish—a tongue against which she naturally cherished a grievance.

"What is the use of learning Spanish?" she demanded of the Boy, who was urging her to speak it. "Majorcan—that is a useful language. Spanish? No. Spanish is no use"

By the wayside the curious wild arums known as *frares* (monks) were growing. Picking a handful, Antonia began with great enjoyment repeating a native rhyme, the point of which lay in knocking off the heads of one of the flowers at the conclusion of each repetition:—

> *"Frare lleig, frare lleig,*
> *Si no dius se Misa, te tomeré es bech!"*

—of which this is an easy translation:—

> *"Lazy friar, lazy friar,*
> *If your Mass is not said I will chop off your head."*

Antonia had a knowledge of vegetables too. Or is it some inherent faculty that teaches children the edible

fruits? When we chanced to pass a big algarroba-tree she darted under it, and, after a little rummaging amid the dry leaves, returned triumphantly bearing some long dark-brown pods, in which the Man was amused to recognise a fruit known to his experimentive boyhood as "locusts." The pods, which are sweet and succulent, are used in Majorca as food for cattle.

Just where the road came almost within sight of Arracó the path to the hills crowned by the windmills branched off. Deciding to get the climbing over first, we left the highway, and mounted amongst most beautiful and varied vegetation. All about us tall pink and crimson heaths were blooming. Small clumps of palms that we had not before seen out of a conservatory grew among the rocks, and great cactus rioted in picturesque masses.

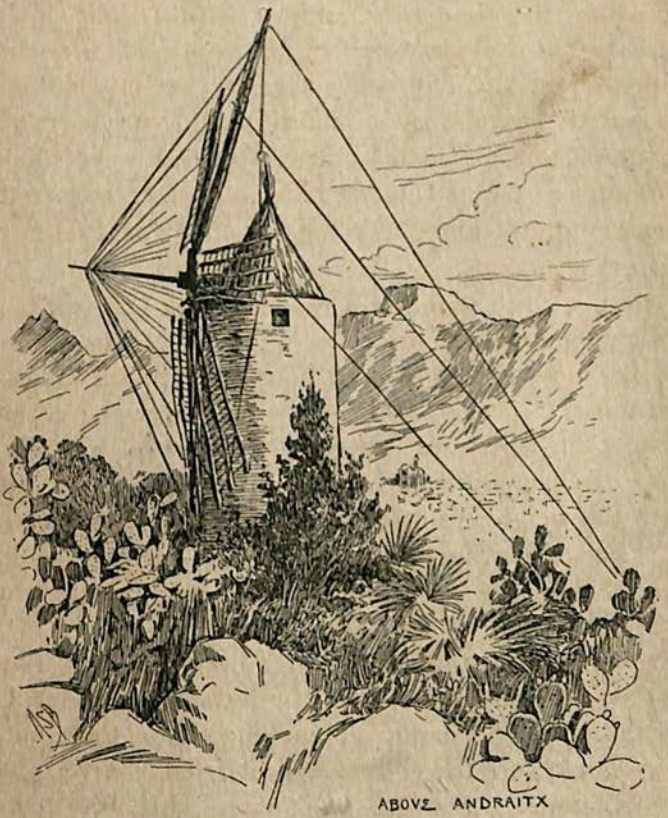
The base of the windmills reached, we enjoyed a view that extended in every direction. Beneath to one side was Arracó, its houses, save where near the church they were huddled closer together, scattered widely over the surface of a cup-like valley, that was so closely encircled by hills that we could discover no way leading out. Above the hills to the north the heights of the island of Dragonera rose from the sea. From another point we looked down on Andraitx, and marked the wide plain that ended in the placid waters of the port.

We had not meant to stay long on the heights, but the varied prospects were so beautiful and the air so placid that we felt tempted to linger. Then the Man took out his sketching block, and the matter was settled. Arracó would remain unvisited. Like the lotus-eaters, we were content and would roam no farther.

We were now so accustomed to Majorcan skilled and thrifty husbandry that it was no surprise to find that even the summit of the height was planted with fruit trees. On a rocky ledge, close under the spreading sails of the windmill, nestled a tiny house, and every handful of soil supported its fig-, almond-, pomegranate- or apple-tree.

The air was soft and gentle. Even at that altitude there was scarcely a breath of wind. Butterflies were hovering about. All the world seemed at peace. From Arracó arose the faint chime of a bell, from beyond the rock-bound coast came the murmur of the sea.

I think it was the discovery that just outside the little



ABOVE ANDRAITX

hut a man was eating his dinner that aroused us to the fact that we also were hungry. Breakfast had been light, and early dinner, a good way off, was not due till two o'clock. Antonia's sharp little white teeth had long ago devoured Antonia's roll and black-pudding. We had started out with the intention of foraging at Arracó; but Arracó,

a scattered handful of pigmy dwellings, lay far down in the hollow.

Then an idea occurred to us. The husbandman, who had finished his meal, and was now lighting a cigarette, would be sure to have food. We would ask him to sell us some bread.

The peasant, who proved to be a kindly soul, had a beard and the most dilapidated hat ever worn by mortal man. But he had no bread. The hut under the windmill was only a shelter. His home was in the valley, and it was evidently his provisions for the day that he had just consumed. He did what he thought was next best, and drawing a great jar of clean water from his well, brought it to us.

The Boy and Antonia, who had gone off to try their luck at the other windmill, returned bringing two shapeless lumps of the stalest rye bread ever eaten, and the kindly dilapidated man who, in genuine concern for our welfare, had been hovering near, disappeared into his shanty, and reappearing with a plate of olives, presented them to us. So off olives, water from an antique jar, and mouldy rye bread that vied with it in antiquity, we took the edge off our appetites.

I must not forget the prickly pears—or cactus figs—that we had picked on the way up. A certain fearful joy attends the gathering of this fruit, which requires the exercise of some ingenuity in dodging its insidious prickles. But there the pleasure ends; for the fruit is both seedy and insipid. To appreciate the prickly pear one would require to meet it in an arid desert.

The sun was sinking when we set out for a final stroll at Andraitx. We were to leave early next morning, and we knew that there were countless walks we must leave unexplored.

A glory of grey and gold and orange was flushing the sky when we turned into the road that wound up the valley. The mountains that rose on either side were glowing roseate from the sunset; but under any conditions the way would

have been very beautiful. It led by a *torrente* in whose bed there was actually a trickle of water, and just beyond a picturesque bridge was a village—of no social importance probably, but assuredly of great artistic charm. The village straggling up the side of the valley was such a place as nobody ever tells one of—one of those unexpectedly picturesque spots that, with a thrill of delight, one discovers for oneself, and feels a proprietorial interest in ever after, almost as though one had invented it. We learned later that the name of the hamlet was Secoma, and that it was divided into two portions, which were known respectively as Secoma Hot and Secoma Cold.

The narrow, winding street was busy. The olive-gatherers were returning from work, and those who had remained at home came out to gape at us. The barber who was shaving a customer, catching sight of our passing reflection in the mirror, abandoned his task and ran to the door to stare, with his customer, lathered and pinafored, close on his heels.

Already were we beginning to recognize, and to be recognized, in the district. An amazingly stately old lady, who appeared to spend her days perched sideways on her panniered donkey, bowed with great dignity from her perch. A handsome fisher-lad, who had formed one of the Man's audience when he was sketching at the port, beamed when we encountered him delivering fish in back-of-the-world Secoma.

We had entered Andraitx expecting little, and had found so much that was interesting and pleasant that we were reluctant to leave it. But an engagement for Sunday afternoon at Palma had to be kept. So perforce we bespoke seats in the diligence leaving at the extraordinary hour of four in the morning.

An hour earlier three great knocks sounded on the closed door of the shop. It was the *vigilante*, who had been warned to arouse us. When we went downstairs it was to find our attentive landlord with a comforting meal of chocolate and hot buttered rolls ready to serve. And concerning this most

excellent host it is only just to say that during our stay we found his efforts on our behalf increase rather than diminish. In case any of my readers may ever chance to visit this out-of-the-way town, I mention that his name is Gabriel Calafill, and his address is Calle Cerda, which, being interpreted, means Pig Street.

All the cocks in Andraitx seemed to be awakened when a jingle of harness-bells drew us to the door of the lamp-lit shop. It was the darkest hour. A single dim lamp was all we saw of the diligence. As it drew up an invisible hand opened the coach door, and mounting the invisible steps I peered into the solid darkness of the interior. If there were any passengers inside, they were dumb and motionless.

Hazarding a greeting, I interjected "Buenos dias" into the darkness.

An instant reply from half a dozen throats showed that the coach was already well filled. A minute later we had insinuated ourselves into the places kept for us by the door, and the coach rolled off into the gloom.

It was the hush before the dawn. The moon had long set. A few pale stars sprinkled the sky. Beyond the town the gloom was less impenetrable, and the road became a dim, grey ribbon slowly unwinding behind us. The trees and mountains were black, undistinguishable masses. The air was soft and very still. Within the coach all was silent. No one moved. Then, as the miles gradually slipped away, the sky began to lighten, and even the deep gloom of the interior became less tangible. In the farther corner dull white lines proclaimed a collar and shirt-cuffs while the sun-tanned flesh they encircled was yet unseen.

As the daylight crept in, our fellow-travellers gradually became visible. Two men, vague entities, had left the coach when half-way we changed horses. There now remained a couple of quiet, respectable market women, a lovely little girl, and a strapping young man.

At the foot of a steep ascent the conveyance stopped, and

following the custom of able-bodied passengers the men got out to take the short cut, and rejoined the lightened diligence on the farther side. Glancing from the back window, as they passed up the heath slope, I noticed that the owner of the brown hands and the white cuffs had already entered into conversation with my men-folk. And when, a quarter of an hour later, they re-entered the coach, all three were on terms of unexpected intimacy.

"This señor," the Boy explained, with an introductory wave of the hand, "is the father of that clever baby. You remember, mother. The one we saw yesterday on the way to the port. He sat in a basket and said 'Bon dì tenga.'"

The father, a strapping, clean-limbed Majorcan, fairly beamed with parental pride as he acknowledged the imputation. The boy, he told us, was now nearly three years old, but he had spoken as well ever since he was two. His own excellent Spanish he accounted for by saying that, like so many Andraitx young men, he had been a sailor, and had voyaged for several years to and from Cuba. Then, having saved some money, he had returned to his native town, had married, and was now farming his own bit of land. This morning he was journeying to Palma to collect the rent of a house he owned there.

The sun was up when the diligence stopped before the *consumos* station at the entrance to Santa Catalina, and we alighted. It was only as we returned to more sophisticated surroundings that I realized that since leaving Palma on Thursday I had not seen a single hat upon a feminine head. No wonder we were stared at in Secoma!

Half an hour later we were sitting at breakfast in the sunshine at the Casa Tranquila. We had arrived at Andraitx in the dusk, and had quitted it in the dusk, so it seemed as though all that had happened during our stay there had been but a pleasant dream.

- CHRISTMAS TURKEYS -

XII

NAVIDAD

WE returned from Andraitx to find that Christmas had stolen a march upon us, taking us unawares.

Our first intimation of it was a communication that reached us from the postal authorities. It announced that a parcel awaited us at the head post office, and stated that if we called between the hours of twelve and thirteen on the following day, and paid the sum of eight pesetas seventy-six centimos charged as duty, we would be entitled to carry it away.

The slip of green paper containing this laconic intimation fluttering into our uneventful lives, interested us hugely. To what could the notice refer? We expected nothing, and yet the amount of the duty—eight pesetas seventy-six cen-

timos—argued it a possession of notable value. We would not have lost a moment before hastening off to pay the impost and claim our property had not the notice expressly mentioned the one hour of the morrow on which it might be procured.

What could it be? Thinking ourselves discreet people, we professed to build no castles on the subject, but we all enjoyed the feeling of mystery.

It was with a pleasant sense of expectancy that next day, shortly after noon, we entered the post office in the Calle San Felio, and after some inquiry discovered the department for the distribution of parcels. Two people were in advance of us. A young workman was getting a small package, a servant-maid was receiving a couple of round, flat boxes so large that a side door in the counter had to be opened for their egress.

Watching, we wondered secretly if ours would be as big, or if it would be small and precious.

After a preliminary signing of a book and the paying of the money, the parcel was produced and solemnly handed over to us. Its dimensions exceeded even our most sanguine expectations, and it was weighty in proportion. The address on the label showed that it had come from the best confectioner in London. This, taken in conjunction with its opulent proportions, seemed to presage a prolonged period of riotous living.

"It must be cake," the Man said.

"It must be a tremendous lot of cake," opined the Boy, who was carrying the bulky parcel. "Let's get home and open it."

Owing, I think, to the cost of sugar, confections of every kind in Majorca are expensive and limited in variety. And although in England a plethora of good things had made us inclined to be blasé, two months of residence in this land where sweets are matters for consumption on high-days and holy-days had revealed in each of us the possession of an unexpected, sweet tooth. And the sight of the ample pro-

portions of that confectioner's parcel set them aching furiously.

"If it's sweets, we must not begin eating them until luncheon is over," I said, more by way of counsel to myself than to the others.

"We'll see," said the Boy, who was determined not to commit himself.

When we had entered the Casa Tranquila the carefully packed box was lifted on to the table and the exciting task of opening it began. The seals had already been broken, but there seemed several miles of carefully knotted string to unwind. Beneath the enveloping brown paper was an encasing of the corrugated cardboard in which breakables are packed. Within that was a thick layer of fine shavings. The dimensions of the package had been considerably lessened when, all the outer wrappings thrown aside, there was revealed a large square tin box. The side presented to us bore no sign of an opening. It really seemed as though the elusive gift was determined to baffle us.

"The box has been carefully soldered," said the Man. "I can't understand how the Customs could fix the amount of the duty without knowing what was inside. How are we going to open it, I wonder?"

But when he turned the box over a wide gash in the bottom revealed that the task had already been performed. Pressing aside the jagged edges of the tin, we saw within yet more shavings. When they had been carefully removed, fragments of china, and something tied in a rent white cloth met our gaze.

"It's been a plum-pudding, and they've smashed it to atoms," the Man said bitterly.

"Oh, what a *shame!* The mean wretches!" I lamented.

The Boy said nothing, but felt for his pipe.

Having succeeded in widening the gash considerably, the Man drew out the remaining enclosures. The pudding —a particularly fine one—was intact, but the bowl that had encased it was shattered. Splinters of the china were

adhering to its dark richness. The Spanish Customs at the frontier, in their zeal to discover the nature of the contents and their fear of permitting a concealed bomb to escape their vigilance, had not only cut open the box and smashed the bowl, they had also ripped across the cloth that tied up the pudding.

"Perhaps they were right to charge eight pesetas seventy-six centimos, but they needn't have made mincemeat of that nice china bowl, and rags of the pudding-cloth," I said indignantly.

"Probably they thought that as mincemeat was also seasonable fare it would be a proper accompaniment to the pudding," the Man said.

But the proof of the pudding is ever the eating of it. Its misadventures over, ours turned out to be a prince of plum-puddings. The flavour was perfection, and the size was such that we had to call in the aid of our friends to eat it. Formal entertainments were outside the scheme of life at the Casa Tranquila, but the Consul and his wife came to supper—menu, hot plum-pudding and flaming brandy. And some native friends came to tea—menu, plum-pudding toasted in slices, and coffee.

Should future generations of Majorcans grow up in the quite erroneous belief that the British serve rich black plum-pudding hot at all meals, I'm afraid the blame must rest with us.

Palma is always bright, but at Christmas-tide an increase of liveliness seemed to pervade the town. The shop windows displayed new wares, and the streets were full of country folk pricing, bargaining, and purchasing. The confectioners' windows were full of large round cardboard boxes, each containing a sugar travesty of a serpent, a weird reptile, reposing on a bed of sweets.

The market square at night, when it is usually deserted, displayed a new and popular species of merchandise. Its outer sides were lined with rows of stalls laden with slabs of native sweetmeats all made in long blocks, and piles of

tempting crystallized fruits. Other stalls held nothing but the curious little figures of native ware—men, women, animals, poultry, all very small—that the Majorcan children use when, with the aid of cork, they build little models of the Nativity in imitation of those seen at Christmastide in the churches.

During the days preceding Christmas Day great preparations for the feast were made. In the market the price of choice fruits and vegetables rose a little. And the wide open space just without the gate of San Antonio—the patron saint of swine—became a busy fair devoted to the sale of pigs, turkeys, sheep and fowls.

The part whose colour and movement rejoiced the artistic soul of the Man was that given over to the display of turkeys. The portion whose comic element delighted the Boy and me was that devoted to the wards of San Antonio, who, to judge by the shrillness and insistence of their cries, was proving himself but an irresponsible and callous guardian.

The peasant-women, neat in the native costume, gaily coloured kerchiefs over their heads, their hair in pigtails, armed with long rods, stood beside their flocks of turkeys. At intervals they scattered handfuls of grain amongst them; but to do the birds justice, they showed little inclination to stray.

On one side a long wall was formed of hooded carts filled with turkeys. And round each brood was a little group of townsfolk, making critical survey of the birds and, after a good deal of wordy chaffering, purchasing. The other side was occupied by a long row of fowl-sellers, who treated their wares with less respect; for splendid cocks, their burnished plumage gleaming with a thousand prismatic hues, lay helpless, their feet tied together, their bills in the dust.

Sucking-pig being the favourite Christmas dinner in this land of sunshine, by far the larger space was allotted to the swine. And swine there were to satisfy all demands, from litters of tiny sucking-pigs surrounding their mothers to

pigs of quite considerable bulk. As the pigs were sold by weight, it is safe to say that there wasn't a thirsty pig in the market that day. And while we saw few pigs being fed, we saw many being encouraged to drink. Some of the salesmen stood by their laden carts ready, on the approach of a likely customer, to thrust a hand into the mass of swart animalism and extract a protesting squeaker. Others sat lazily on chairs by their flocks, content to wait to be approached. While some of the older herdsmen wore slung over the shoulders the distinctive goatskin of their calling, most of the younger were attired in suits of corduroy, sunfaded into glorious harmonies of golds and browns and blues. We noticed that whilst certain of the men dealt in turkeys, none of the women sold pigs.

And out of the city streamed the townsfolk, money in hand for the purchase of their Christmas dinner. Ladies in mantillas, attended by neat maids, bought turkeys; prosperous-looking tradesmen, accompanied by pinafored shoplads provided with bits of rope, walked about pricing pigs; and lean operatives, with a hungry eye for the yearly tit-bit.

It was after a pig had changed owners that the fun began. The market being held outside the city walls, the purchase had first to be taken to the *consumos* shed to be weighed and have the duty paid on it. And the pigs, although comparatively placid while yet in company with their old comrades, when severed from them protested with full strength of lung and limb. Then woe betide the luckless being whose task it was to carry the agitator home. One man only did we see who had had the forethought to bring a sack in which to carry home his rebellious purchase.

Everybody appeared to have evolved a different method of conveyance. Some men wore them as a collar round the neck, grasping the fore feet in one hand, the hind in the other. Some tried to lead them, with dire results. One flustered woman we saw had a child in her arms and was dragging at the end of a string a plump young porker that refused to walk. The majority, relinquishing any attempt

at suasion, simply clutched the furiously objecting quadrupeds desperately in their arms and made the best of their way through the streets.

Just as we were leaving the market we encountered a trio of elderly ladies, attended by a demure little maid in pigtail and *rebozillo*, whom we had noticed making a careful scrutiny before deciding. Their choice seemed at last to have been made, for the young servant carried in her arms, as tenderly as though it were a baby, a tiny sucking-pig. So far it had uttered no complaint, but just as the group turned into the street it awoke to the knowledge that something untoward was happening, and with the energy of one thrice its fighting weight, began squealing and squirming. In a moment consternation fell upon the sedately pacing quartette. When we last saw them a man had been hired to carry home the pigling, whose lamentations still rent the air.

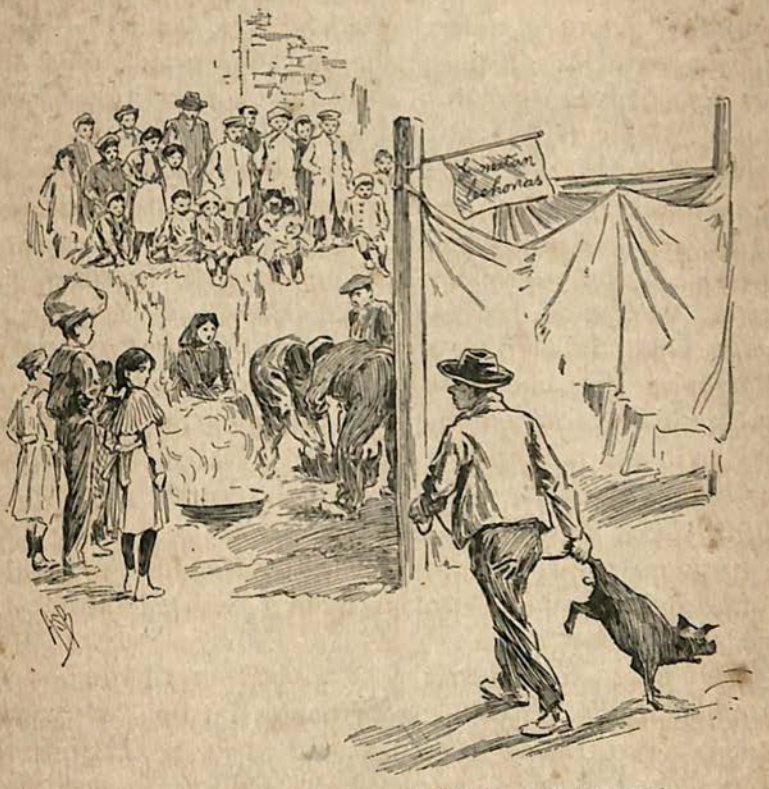
During the day or two that would elapse before the creatures were sacrificed for consumption they appeared to reside in the bosom of the family circles and to be treated as honoured guests. The fact that a home was in a flat three floors up did not deter its occupants from housing a four-footed edible guest. Turkeys strutted in doorways and upon high balconies. Proud children escorted pigs out for an airing.

Two days before the feast we noticed on a piece of waste ground just inside the gate of Santa Catalina an enclosure roughly constructed of planks and sacking. From a post fluttered a banner of brown paper inscribed with the legend, *Se matan lechonas* (Little pigs kill themselves). And thither, the right moment having arrived, people brought their pets. Within the enclosure, but in full view of the public, the piglings were killed, soused with the boiling water that was kept bubbling over a fire, scraped and made ready for the pot in the twinkling of an eye.

On Christmas Eve we attended the midnight service in the Cathedral. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and the streets of Palma were unusually busy. Groups of people,

the women and children all carrying folding stools, or in some cases rush-seated chairs, were walking sedately in the direction of the churches.

In the silver light there was something mysterious about the succession of black-robed figures—the women's heads



A SCENE of SLAUGHTER

muffled in black mantillas or black silk kerchiefs—that moved steadfastly along the narrow mediæval streets.

When we reached the Cathedral many people had already gathered. When we would have taken our usual seats under the organ, one of the canons in a robe of lace and rose-coloured silk approached and whispered to me in French that that portion of the church was reserved for men, but that I was free to take any place I liked on the opposite

side. Crossing the foot-high wooden barrier that had been erected down the centre of the nave, under his escort, I set up the sketching stool I had brought at the base of one of the great pillars, and watched the edifice gradually fill with a reverent throng of worshippers.

And now the necessity for the folding stools became evident, for while the portion of the building allotted to men was well provided with seats, only a great square of matting covered that half of the floor-space that had been set apart for the women.

The Cathedral was brilliantly lit with electricity; and although there was something inexpressibly affecting in the sight of the kneeling multitude, to us the Cathedral lost much of the sombre magnificence it had in the day-time, when, except for the candles burning on the altar, the only light was that which stole in through the stained-glass windows, and the greater part of the grand temple was rendered impressive by obscurity.

Later, when we spoke of this to our friend the padre he agreed with us. But, as he said in his irreproachable English, "What can we do? The Cathedral is very large, and the people are not all good."

There was no respect of persons. Wrinkled old peasant-women and lovely young members of the ancient Majorcan nobility knelt side by side. The pew my men-folk occupied was shared by a gentleman in a fur-lined coat, and two little ragamuffins who, oblivious of their sacred surroundings, slumbered peacefully throughout the proceedings, curled up snugly together like a pair of monkeys nesting in a tree-top.

At a pause in the service a white-robed youth, supposed to represent the Angel Gabriel, who was attended by two others carrying lighted candles, appeared in a pulpit. He wore a scarlet cap and bore a naked sword, and in a melodious voice chanted in Spanish *Sibila*—a hymn that foretells the varied fates awaiting the evil and the good at the end of the world.

At one o'clock, when we slipped out of the Cathedral, leaving the multitude still at worship, and walked homewards through the brilliant moonlight, all was hushed and peaceful. The signs of carnage had vanished. The banner with the suicidal legend, *Se matan lechonas*, no longer fluttered by the gate of Santa Catalina; and only a few vagrant turkey feathers, blown about the roads, remained to tell of the innocents who had been butchered to make a Christian holiday.

Christmas, we had been warned, would be a quiet day in Palma: a day of family greetings, of indoor festivities, when the streets would be deserted. Any feasts we might have shared were far away in fog-bound Britain, and neither turkey nor sucking-pig graced the larder of the Casa Tranquila. The weather was idyllic, like the most perfect of perfect summer days at home—even after more than two months' experience of Balearic Island weather we had not ceased to be surprised by its consistent beauty. So we decided to have a picnic.

We had heard vaguely of a famous cave in the country behind our own district of Son Españolet—a cave important enough to afford shelter to the people of Palma who, in thousands, had fled thither to escape from a plague of cholera that sixty or seventy years before had devastated the town. But while everybody seemed to know of the existence of the cave, no amount of inquiry elicited information as to its exact whereabouts. So on this lovely Christmas morning we resolved to take luncheon with us and spend the day hunting for it.

I think it was the Rudder Grangers who wished to live in the last house of a village, as by doing so they could be in touch with humanity on the one side and with Nature on the other. Our own road, the Calle de Mas, came very near answering these requirements, for, being the last road in the little suburb, it met both town and country. By walking to the end of the houses, over whose garden walls oranges gleamed golden, and turning to the

left by the brand-new Villa Dolores, and past the old farm-house that stood hedged in with tall cactus by the wayside, we were at once on the verge of the beautiful rural scenery.

Our informant had been right. The street was empty. As we passed along, a smell as of roast sucking-pig greeted us; but everybody was indoors behind their closely shuttered windows.

The road that leads through the undulating almond and olive groves towards Son Puigdorfila and the hills had never been so deserted. And never had the air been softer or the mountains more mistily blue. The leaves of the gnarled olives shone silver-grey beside the dark, rich foliage of the carob-trees, and the white blossoms of a honey-scented weed thickly flecked the green of the six-inch high grain.

The village of Son Rapiña, perched on its eminence, gleamed like a jewel in the strong sunlight; but the path leading towards it showed not a single traveller. For once, farm-work had ceased; the only sound that reached us was a far-off musical tinkle from the bells of a flock of goats as they moved about, seeking for fallen pods under the great algarroba-trees.

The cave we had gathered, was somewhere near Son Puigdorfila, but when we had passed that country-house, and had wandered down the valley towards the empty bed of the *torrente*, we found nothing that in the most remote way suggested the presence of a cave.

We had almost abandoned the quest when a sound of bells warned us of the approach of a herd of plump brindled asses, which appeared under the guidance of an old man.

In his suit of faded blue cotton, with a goatskin slung over his shoulders and a gaily striped kerchief bound round his brow and knotted at the back, the long ends falling beneath his wide-brimmed hat, and a tall staff in his wrinkled brown hands, he was a fine specimen of the hale Majorcan peasant whose declining years hold no greater physical discomfort than a gradual lessening of the full strength of manhood.

He knew of the cave—*Cueva Fuente Santa* he called it. Nay more, he knew its history from the making to the present day. And while the brindled asses browsed around us he told us the story of the Cave of the Holy Well.

The Conquistador, it appeared, on setting out on his perilous mission, had vowed to the Virgin that if through her aid he succeeded in ousting the heathen from Majorca, he would signalize his victory by building a noble Cathedral in her honour; and it was in quarrying the stone from the steep ground by the side of the *torrente* that the great cave had been formed. He told us of the refugees who, fleeing before the cholera, had camped there in safety; and brought the record up to date by mentioning that to the present day on the Sunday after Easter great crowds of the townsfolk made a little pilgrimage to the Holy Well, to drink its waters and to eat their *empanadas*—pies made specially of lamb for the occasion.

The cave was near—only a little way, he added, as he hurried to overtake his now straying herd. If we would proceed farther down the side of the *torrente* we would discover it, close by the old well.

So in the sunshine, which was warm without a trace of oppression, for the sea air agreeably tempered the heat, we wandered on until, in the side of a fir-topped bank, we found the cave.

And it was quite unlike anything we had imagined. To enter by the wide square portal was to find oneself in a vast, many-chambered hall. In quarrying out the interior the long-forgotten workmen had left at intervals great rudely sculptured blocks that served as supporting pillars to the roof. Four square holes, open to the sky, afforded ventilation. Round the walls, and about the bases of the pillars, had been hewn ledges which might have served for seats or for beds.

At one point the roof had been blackened by smoke from the fugitives' fires. But the whole interior was dry and airy. There was not a trace of damp anywhere, and the sandy

floor was one that could easily have been kept clean and wholesome. It would have been hard to imagine a more secure or a more sanitary place of refuge.

Down below, nearer the river-bed, was the quaint Moorish well—square in form, with a domed roof. And looking down the valley of the *torrente* from the brow of the hill in front of the cave where the fig-trees grew, we had a grand prospect of Palma Cathedral, that from each variant point of view seems to gain a new beauty.

An unwonted silence lay over the sunlit land. For once there was no sound of human voice uplifted in song, and that aided the sense of peace. The Balearic islander is the most skilful market-gardener in the world. He makes roads that enable one to drive up one side of a mountain and down the other with perfect ease. He builds walls that look as though they would last throughout the ages and successfully resist a shock of earthquake at the end of time. But as a vocalist he is not attractive.

I must write this heresy in a whisper, for the information would surprise him. He is unconscious of his lack of melody, and rather fancies himself as a songster. The merry Majorcan plough-boy does not "whistle o'er the lea." He sings, or rather chants, in a loud, discordant voice, an artless recitative, apparently improvising both words and music and weaving the little incidents of the day, the trivial happenings of his surroundings, into his interminable lay.

When the Boy was painting in the beautiful undulating country that lay between Son Españolet and the mountains, he sometimes discovered a reference to himself in the *pastorale.*

> *"It is the painter English.*
> *He is making a picture.*
> *He has put Gabriel into it.*
> *Perhaps he will put me also,*
> *And my fine pigs."*

But though the voice of the herdsman might be unmelodious, it mingled harmoniously with the jangle of bells

as his flock of pigs, goats, sheep, or asses moved slowly over the uplands under the fragrant almond-trees.

The air was sweet with perfume of the wild lavender that grew in profusion about the entrance to the caves. Not a soul was in sight. It was with a quiet scorn of flesh-pots—even of those that contained sucking-pig—that, sitting in the sunshine, we lunched frugally off sandwiches, claret, and big yellow Muscat grapes.

We had left the Casa Tranquila with the understanding that the day was to be observed as a complete holiday. Yet when the cave revealed picturesque possibilities it would have surprised one unaccustomed to the devious ways of the Man and the Boy to have seen how well provided they chanced to be with working materials.

Leaving them busily sketching, I wandered about gathering the heads of sweet lavender. I had a newly born ambition to fill a cushion with the dried blossoms—an ambition that in England would have been extravagant, but one that in this gracious land was to be gained by a little charming labour. So with that feeling of absolute mental content and of physical well-being that seemed to characterize our Balearic days, I picked and picked and picked until the luncheon-basket was full to overflowing with the purple-grey flowers, and the subtle odour of sweet lavender encompassed me with a cloud of fragrance.

Even in these days of late December I had never taken a country walk without finding a fresh wild flower. To-day it was a rose-coloured cornflower, *cyanus;* and in addition, growing close to the caves, I came upon a fruit, or vegetable, that was quite new to me. The latter was splendidly decorative. Imagine a giant tomato plant erect and armed with aggressive prickles, that bore a profusion of apples whose colour varied from green mottled with white in the unripe, to brilliant yellow in the mature. I found afterwards that it is known as the "Devil's tomato." Tufts of the pale pink heath flourished under the pines, and on the slopes about the fig-trees my favourite Japanese-like dwarf asphodel, whose

white, starry blossoms were striped with chocolate, were out in profusion.

The far-off tinkle of bells that, to our now accustomed ears, ranked almost as a necessary accompaniment to the scenery, had gradually been drawing nearer; and soon the troop of donkeys again appeared, followed by their patient, kindly-faced herd. They were the only living things in sight, and as they moved slowly along they harmonized delightfully with the rustic surroundings.

Approaching nightfall drove us homewards, reluctant to end a day that had been full of intangible charm. The record of its doings, baldly set forth on paper, reveals a total lack of incident. The preceding Christmas Day, spent at a seaside hotel in laboriously enjoying the festivities of the season, we had almost forgotten. These placid hours passed quietly in this country of sweet smells, of gentle noises, of pure, soft air, we would always remember.

As we strolled towards Son Españolet the setting sun seemed determined, in honour of the day, to give an extra glorious display of fireworks. And when the glow had faded from the mountains, leaving them purple velvet, a vivid rose flush that melted into the blue haze of the distance lingered long in the eastern sky. And just above was the nearly full moon, a globe of shining silver. There was no actual dusk, hardly any gloaming; for before the sun had sunk to rest the moon, her lamp brilliantly burning, was ready to do duty.

AFTER THE FEAST OF THE CONQUISTADOR, PALMA CATHEDRAL

XIII

THE FEAST OF THE CONQUISTADOR

IT was the 31st of December, and the day was one of a long succession of calm summer-like days. The sky was a cloudless blue, and the air so warm that in the plantations beyond Son Españolet sundry over-zealous almond-trees, deceived by the brilliance of the weather, were already bursting into premature bloom.

It was too fine to waste indoors the remaining hours of the year, and the gay little town was always interesting. So we walked towards Palma, and, after strolling down the mole and revelling in the colour and movement of the harbour, we ascended the long flight of steps leading to the ramparts, and, passing the Almudaina, reached the Cathedral, whose grandeur and sacred beauty ever held a fresh fascination for us.

Entering by a side door, we judged from the presence of certain extra decorative trappings in front of the high altar that some special service was in prospect. People were already seated in the pews that filled the front portion of the nave. Finding places at a side, we waited, listening to the joyous strains of the grand organ.

Just before eleven o'clock the great doors of the Cathedral were thrown open, and the warm sunlight streamed into the sombre interior. Then, through the hush of expectancy that had fallen over the congregation, we heard the far-off beating of drums. Something was looked for—was even

now on its way—we knew not what; but we also waited, expectant.

Nearer the sound came, and nearer. From our side seats we could see the guard in front of the Almudaina saluting, then from the brilliant sunlight into the mysterious half-gloom of the Cathedral there passed a quaint little procession, led by a drum-major gorgeous in scarlet and gold. Behind him, three and three, came the drummers, still—even within the sacred walls of the Cathedral—keeping up the *rat-a-plan* with a vigour that seemed almost profane.

Half-way up the nave they turned aside and stood, rapidly plying their drum-sticks; while, preceded by two mace-bearers in robes of scarlet, their symbols of office over their shoulders, came in evening dress the Civil Governor and the Alcalde, followed by members of the Council. Behind, in uniform, came the Chiefs of Police.

When they were seated—the Civil Governor, as representing the King, being placed in a chair under an embroidered canopy, the others in a specially draped pew alongside—the service began. At one portion of the ceremony a priest with attendants mounted the pulpit, and in an eloquent address related the whole story of the conquest of Majorca by Jaime, the young King of Aragon, who on that very day six hundred and eighty years before had entered the city.

In picturesque language and in fine declamatory style he told how for many hundreds of years the lovely island had suffered under the oppression of the wicked and tyrannical Moors. How prosperity had rendered them only the more piratical and cruel, so that no Christian ship was safe from their assaults. How, rendered yet bolder by success, they even raided the Catalan coast, sacking Barcelona, and killing its Count. How at length the indignation of the Spaniards roused them to take action; and the heads of the ecclesiastical, the military, and the royal sections meeting together, resolved to fit out a fleet, and to dispatch an expedition to wrest the island from the heathen. Under the handsome and daring young King of Aragon the fleet of over a hundred

and forty vessels, containing an army thirty thousand strong, set sail. They left the Spanish coast on the 1st of September, 1229, but the Moors made so determined a resistance that it was the last day of the year before the hosts of King Jaime succeeded in entering the town.

As in duty bound, the orator ascribed mainly to the influence of the Church over the Catholic hearts of the people the success of the expedition that had freed the Christians from their oppressors.

The oration ended, service at the high altar proceeded, while at intervals gay, almost jocund, music burst forth from the grand organ. The lightsome strains were infectious. The Alcalde unconsciously beat time with his staff, and the fingers of the youngest representative of the municipal government played an imaginary instrument in time to the music.

There was such a decidedly Gilbert-and-Sullivan suggestion about the sprightly air that one might be pardoned for expecting the chief ecclesiastical dignitary to advance singing—

"I am the Bishop of this Diocese"

or for anticipating the attendant priests making hearty response—

"And a right good Bishop, too!"

Later in the proceedings the clergy formed into a procession, led by white-robed acolytes and choristers carrying crucifixes and lighted candles, and walked slowly round the Cathedral, chanting as they went; the Civil Governor, the Alcalde, and the other representatives of the Government bringing up the rear.

The impressive religious service ended, the drummers again fell into line, and the civic dignitaries, with the mace-bearers, marching to the sound of the drums, passed out into the sunlit streets. Following in their footsteps, we sped towards the Town Hall, in front of which, as we now

gathered, the annual ceremony of saluting the flagstaff of King Jaime the Conquistador was to take place.

There a gay scene awaited us. Detachments of soldiers, their bands playing, lined the laurel-strewn space before the building. All the balconies were full of spectators and the street was thronged with what appeared to be the entire juvenile population of Palma.

With the arrival of the Governor and his escort the ceremony was speedily completed. The flagstaff, which was heavily wreathed in laurel, was carried round. Arms having been presented, the historic trophy retired into carefully tended seclusion until another anniversary would again bring it into prominence. The military formed up, and to the sound of inspiriting music marched cheerily off. The feast of the Conquistador was over.

The origin of the custom we found reached back into bygone ages. For many centuries after King Jaime's death the people of Palma had an annual procession on the anniversary of the taking of the city, and walked through the streets with the banner under which their deliverer had fought so valiantly carried before them, while the entire populace prayed for the safety of his soul. The banner has long since rotted into dust. Now the staff alone is borne, and apart from the promenade inside the Cathedral there is no procession.

The inner chambers of the Cathedral guard a wealth of treasure, the collection of centuries, and an inestimable array of relics, which, through the courtesy of the church dignitaries, we had the privilege of seeing.

One morning about ten o'clock, when we entered the Cathedral from the sunlit streets, the faint blue mist of incense hung about the high altar, and the sound of chanting echoed through the aisles. At first sight the vast building appeared to be empty; but as our eyes became accustomed to the perpetual twilight that reigns under the great roof we became conscious of kneeling worshippers, dimly seen through the obscurity—a young lady, her

mantilla-framed face bent over her rosary, an old man praying before one of the side chapels where a faint light was burning.

We were expected. Our friend the padre, a dignified figure clad in vestments of lace and fur, welcoming us with a silent shake of the hand, led us noiselessly along a side aisle.

As, passing through a door that led behind the high altar, we caught a glimpse of the officiating clergy, it almost seemed as though we were behind the scenes at a theatre where some great life-drama was being enacted. There were the stately and imposing performers, the engrossed and scarcely visible audience.

Leaving us in charge of the brother priest who acts as custodian of the treasure, our sponsor returned to resume his part in the service. Preceding us through the sacristy, our new guide escorted us to an inner chamber where, in an impregnable safe built in the wall, the venerated sacred relics of the Cathedral are kept.

Carefully unlocking and throwing open the guardian doors, he revealed a cabinet draped with a crimson curtain. Slipping behind the drapery, he busied himself lighting candles. Then, reappearing, he drew aside the curtain, revealing the almost startling magnificence of the precious metal and rare pearls in which the relics are enshrined.

One object—that occupying the place of honour—was carefully enswathed. Bending low before it, the padre, with reverent hands, withdrew the covering, showing an exquisite cross of gold, inset with priceless gems and hung with strings of costly pearls. In the centre of the cross—faintly perceptible through its encasement of crystal—were some fragments of the true Cross. On certain occasions, such as the service on Good Friday afternoon, this relic is borne in procession round the Cathedral.

The custodian, who was an enthusiast happy in his appreciation of and delight in his mission, proceeded to show us more of the wondrous treasures of the old Cathedral.

Among the things almost too sacred to mention were three thorns from Christ's crown of thorns, a piece of the purple cloth of His robe, a fragment of His swaddling band, and a portion of a garment worn by the Virgin Mary.

A bone, black and shrivelled with age, was from the finger of St. Peter. And an extremely interesting relic—one so veritably antique that it is mentioned in the first inventory of the sacred trophies belonging to the Cathedral—is the tip of one of the arrows with which St. Sebastian, who is the patron saint of Palma, was killed. Like all the other relics, this is carefully enclosed. Another relic of the saint is the bone of his fore-arm, which is enclosed in a case surmounted by a hand, on whose outstretched fingers are many costly rings, votive offerings presented in gratitude by those who believe they have benefited by his intercession on their behalf.

Two magnificent crowns, those that on special occasions are worn by the effigies of the Virgin and the Holy Child, were also in that safe in company with other valuables too many to catalogue.

The Mass was still in progress. While we gazed from the face of the priest, which glowed with fervour, to the wondrous things he showed us with such tender veneration, came a sound of chanting, the music of boys' voices rising sweet and clear. There was still the first impression of having been admitted behind the scenes—an impression which the entrance of certain of the officiating clergy who came into the sacristy to change their vestments served to deepen.

Leaving an attendant to extinguish the lights and re-lock the great iron doors, the padre opened other cupboards and showed us a plethora of riches, valuable not only for the material but for the beauty and artistic skill of the workmanship. A crucifix bore an exquisitely carven ivory figure of the dead Christ, and in the hollow of the slender stem of a gold cup a craftsman of surprising ingenuity had contrived to mould a representation of the Last Supper, so minute in detail that it portrayed not only the table

with the company seated around it but also the food that was placed before them. On the inner base of the vase, the executant of this triumph of the goldsmith's art had graven his name, which I forget, and his age, which at the date of the completion of this intricate and original piece of work was sixty-nine.

Our guide did not scamp his task. He appeared to take both pride and pleasure in it, and showed us everything, from the vestments, which were rigid with gold and embroidery, to the massive silver candelabra worth nearly seven thousand pounds, that are so heavy that when they are moved into the body of the Cathedral for use during special services, it takes four men to carry the top, and six men the base, of each.

At three different dates, when long-continued drought had induced privation, this silver has been sold for the relief of the poor; and three times has it been bought back again, and restored to its place in the Cathedral.

Until recently the embalmed body of King Jaime II. (who died in his palace of the Almudaina just across the road from the principal entrance to the Cathedral), which rested in a marble sarcophagus in front of the high altar, was shown to the public on the 31st of December, the anniversary of the day on which his father, the Conquistador, freed Palma from the Moors.

The mummified corpse is no longer publicly exhibited, and the coffin containing the remains has been removed to a recess behind and above the high altar, where it rests awaiting burial.

By special permission we were allowed to see the body of the monarch. The coffin, taken from the sarcophagus, had been placed on a stone bracket. An attendant, mounting a ladder that leant against the wall at the head of the coffin, slid back the lid. And in turn we climbed up and, bending over, peeped into the open coffin to see, through intervening glass—what? A royal robe of velvet and gold and ermine, the lace-trimmed sleeves crossed at the empty

wrists, and above the neck of the garment a dark fleshless skull, with the brown skin tightened over it, closed eyes deep sunk in the sockets, and toothless jaws wide agape. A rose-pink velvet nightcap encased the shrunken head of the monarch who, six hundred years ago, reigned over Majorca.

The reign of this second Jaime, which extended over

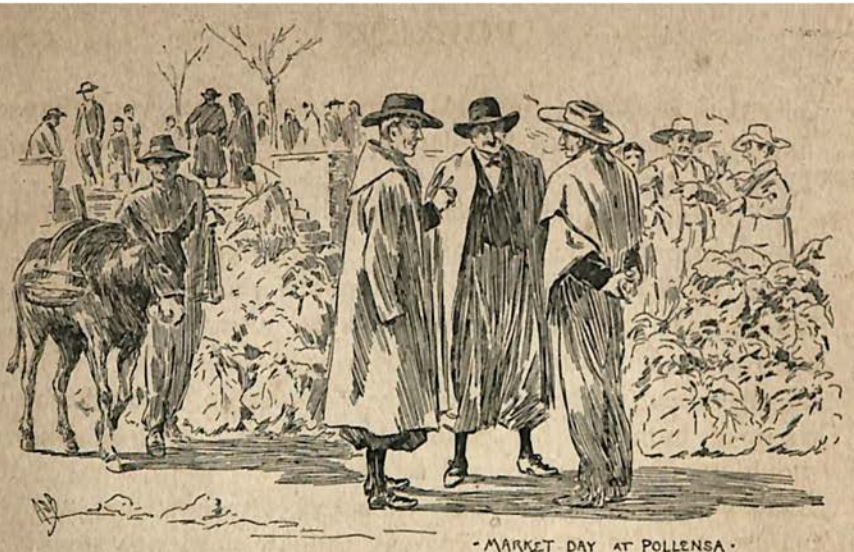
- THE ROYAL REMAINS -

- THE COFFIN OF JAIME II IN PALMA CATHEDRAL -

a period of more than thirty years, would appear to have been an exceptionally placid one for these warlike days. We know that he brought from Spain cunning workmen who converted for his use the castle of the Moorish Amir, the Almudaina, into a royal palace, and there a code of Court etiquette was formulated and put into practice by the new monarch.

The wife of the Captain-General, who now occupies the old Moorish palace, a few nights before we saw the remains of the former tenant of the Almudaina, gave a reception in the form of a "tea-party"—the guests to arrive at ten o'clock, the tea to be served at midnight. One wonders what the nature of King Jaime's Court functions were—at what hour his guests assembled, what the entertainment was, and when they dispersed.

The imposing marble sarcophagus in which in times past these remnants of royalty were entombed has been removed to a corner of the cloisters, where we saw it standing forlorn and forgotten.



MARKET DAY AT POLLENSA.

XIV

POLLENSA

WE had intended deferring our expedition to the neighbouring isle of Minorca till later in the season; until after the week or two of cold weather that we had been warned to expect in January had passed. But as the opening days of the year went by in brilliant sunshine, and the temperature continued ideal, we felt tempted to delay no longer.

It was the Man's suggestion that we should make a roundabout tour of it, visiting first the old-world towns of Pollensa and Alcudia, then sailing from the port of Alcudia to Minorca and returning from Mahón direct to Palma.

So at daybreak on the 8th of January Bartolomé appeared to drive us to the station.

The sun had risen, Bartolomé was smiling, and the hills beyond Son Españolet shone pink and heliotrope in the morning light as we drove along; yet there was a sharp little nip in the air, and the *consumeros* were still shivering in their blankets, covered up to their noses and cowering

over their braziers. Without these reminders we would have forgotten that it was the depth of winter in the Fortunate Isles.

At Palma station the customary small bustle heralded the departure of the morning train. The porter of the Grand Hotel was seeing off a French couple who were going to Manacor to visit the Dragon Caves. Among the little company of natives with their fringed shawls and white muslin *rebozillos* the French lady, who wore a smart flower-trimmed toque on her golden hair and costly furs on her shoulders, looked oddly out of place.

On this occasion the 7.40 train left with extreme punctuality, and its rate of progress, though slow, was steady. The only other passenger in our second-class compartment was a swarthy man who wore a yachting cap, white shoes, and a striped blanket. He evidently felt cold, and as he sat curled up on the seat his appearance was a ludicrous combination of a member of the Royal Yacht Club and an Asiatic hospital patient who had risen to have his bed made.

He was journeying to Inca, apparently for the first time, and when he asked for information regarding the number of stations to be passed before his destination was reached, it seemed reversing the natural order of things that we foreigners should be able to give it.

Nearly two months had passed since we travelled over the line, and it was interesting to note the difference in the appearance of things. Then the rich red earth had been furrowed by the plough, or was in process of sowing. Now it was covered with long lines of sturdy beans, or with springing grain level and green as a tennis lawn.

The fig-trees and grape-vines were leafless now; but the evergreen carobs showed the tender shades of the new leaves at the tips of the well-covered branches. The olives wore their accustomed silver-grey, but the first pale blossoms of the year flecked the almond-trees with white.

We had taken *combinados* tickets, and the second-class

fare—two pesetas thirty-five centimos—included the ten-mile coach drive from La Puebla to Pollensa.

When we alighted at the station two diligences were waiting, one for Pollensa, the other for Alcudia. Choosing the right one the Man and I got inside with six other folk —three young men, two young women, one old man, and a baby too young to count. The Boy went on the box, luggage was piled on the roof, and the horses set to work to drag their heavy load over the dry, newly mended road.

The Majorcan way of repairing a road is to put a layer of roughly broken stones over the worn bits, then to block the smooth places with chunks of rock, so that the unhappy travellers are perforce obliged to do the work of levelling by driving over the loose stones.

But though the way was rough and jolty there was no dust, and there were no mosquitoes; and our company, including the brand-new baby, was the soul of good nature. The young men and women chatted gaily together in the harsh Majorcan dialect; the old man evincing a friendly interest in the conversation, which difference of nationality unfortunately rendered unintelligible to us. Once or twice, when the subject under discussion appeared more than usually entertaining, the Man and I whispered to each other, as we had done before in similar circumstances, "If we could only understand what they are saying!"

Our progress was slow, owing partly to the roughness of the road, and partly, as the Boy later explained, to the fact that the driver, who was a very old man, fell asleep at intervals, and only awoke when the horses stopped.

Half-way to Pollensa we exchanged drivers with the coach that was on its way to La Puebla; and our new man being wide-awake, matters progressed more briskly. The Boy told us afterwards that, seen from his place on the box, the scenery had been glorious; but from the interior of the diligence it was impossible to gain more than a general impression of lovely wooded slopes, and of distant hills that

seemed to draw nearer and nearer until, suddenly, while Pollensa seemed still a long way off, we found ourselves in a narrow lane lined with tall houses. In and out of the most tortuous streets imaginable the diligence twisted, then abruptly came to a standstill at no place in particular, and we realized that we had penetrated to the heart of Pollensa.

We had no idea where to go. All the information we had been able to gather about the Pollensa *fondas*—there were no so-called hotels—was that they were reputed to be bad. But when the coach stopped, and we had alighted, and were standing with our luggage on the cobble-stones, wondering in what direction to turn for a lodging, a young man, plump, clean-shaven, bare-headed, appearing from nowhere, begged breathlessly to recommend his *fonda*.

Following him through crooked ways we reached the hostelry, which was in a little square near the market-place. Mounting a steep stair, we entered a large lavishly windowed room furnished with many round tables and chairs. It had a little bar and looked to the square; behind it was a dining-room.

The Boy, who was our spokesman, following the expected procedure, inquired the terms per day.

"Six pesetas." Our host, following an equally expected procedure when arranging with foreigners, had quoted his top price.

"No," said the Boy, whom experience had taught wisdom. "Three pesetas; that is enough. Can you not do it for that?"

The landlord waved his hands. "That depends on what you have," he replied, quite reasonably. "Three pesetas—yes, if you will be content with soup and one other dish at dinner and at supper."

"And is the little breakfast included?"

"Yes, señor. Coffee and milk."

So it was decided. Three pesetas a day was to be the price. And it was with a feeling of keen curiosity as to what our host would provide for the money that we awaited

the appearance of the first meal, which was to be served immediately. Señor Calafill at Andraitx had given us the perfection of French cookery, the best of wines, at three and a half pesetas. But his house was less pretentious, being a shop only and not a *fonda*.

Our hostess, a nice, bright little woman who wore her hair in a pigtail and the *rebozillo*, bustled in and began laying the marble-topped table with fresh napkins, good cutlery, rolls, a bottle of wine, and a syphon of soda-water. Then she added a dish of fruit, and running off to the kitchen returned with the soup—a good thick Majorcan soup, full of rice and sweet peppers and chopped meat. The second course was a large dish of fish served with fried potatoes. Then we had, as a fruit course, apples and mandarin oranges. The fare might not be lavish, but it was assuredly all we required.

Our rooms, which were the best the house afforded, were small but clean, and during our stay proved quite free from mosquitoes.

When we discussed how we would spend the afternoon, the Boy and I hotly advocated walking to the port of Pollensa. A traveller from an inland town who had shared the box-seat of the diligence with the Boy had spoken enthusiastically of its beauty. His family was accustomed to spend the hot months there. The fishing, he said, was splendid, the fish being of much finer quality than those taken in the neighbouring bay of Alcudia.

"A salmonetta caught in the bay of Pollensa *is* a salmonetta," he had declared emphatically.

The Man wisely objected to the expedition. The port, he reminded us, was seven kilometros (nearly five miles) away, and that was too far to go and return comfortably in the short winter afternoon. Besides, when we had come to see a curious old town, why not stay to look at it?

But from my bedroom window I had caught an enchanting glimpse of the port—a segment of blue water hemmed in by steep rocky mountains. It seemed so near that I flouted the

idea of the five miles, and the afternoon being a glorious one we finally agreed to go.

As we passed along an outlying street an old man, who stood outside his house superintending the drying of a great tray of macaroni, wished us "Good day."

In returning his greeting the Man added a remark on the beauty of the weather, which indeed to us seemed perfect.

"No. This weather is not good. It is bad," the old man said severely. "It is rain that is needed. The country suffers. No, señor. This weather is bad, not good."

The way was a relic of the Roman occupation: a splendid wide level road that, except for a curve where it left the town, stretched like a broad ruled line between us and the blue sea. It could not really be so far as seven kilometros, I assured my vigilant conscience, which was inclined to remonstrate. It looked no distance at all.

So we went on our wilful way, journeying gaily between the thorny hedges of aloes—one up among the rocks on the hill-side was in bloom—and beside the little farms that bordered either side of the road.

The road was long—quite five miles—but there was always something interesting at hand, and the enticing strip of blue water drew us onward. The hills on the opposite side of the bay had already caught the rays of the setting sun, and looked like a bit of some dream-world.

The port of Pollensa had a quaint semicircle of houses, divided in the middle by the road we had come, which ended only on the bit of wharf that ran out into the spacious well-sheltered bay, where the British fleet had often found commodious anchorage. Save for a few local *falucas* it was now empty.

In the little enclosed yards in front of the fisher-houses men and girls were at work weaving from bright yellow strips of bamboo the tall, beehive-looking lobster-traps in local use. Behind the houses, on the left side of the bay, rose a precipitous hill. In front, between the houses and the water, was a line of fig-trees. Along towards the seaward

point were some small charmingly situated summer residences.

When we turned our faces townwards the sun had already set; and though we walked smartly, the way that in the going had seemed short appeared to lengthen as the shadows crept over the hills and darkness encircled us.

Pollensa lies, a close huddle of old sun-dried houses, in a narrow curved valley between high mountains. Until you are close upon it it is almost entirely hidden, and that was probably the intention with which it was originally planned. During the last mile or two of the return journey, when the shades had fallen and we went on and on without apparently getting any nearer our habitation, my opinion of the distance that divided the port from the town became considerably modified. Still, we were only pleasantly tired when the first of the town lights appeared, and we found our way to the *fonda* through the twisted streets, past many well-lit barbers' shops where, in full view of the public gaze, men were being shaved or sitting in patient rows resignedly awaiting turns that, to judge from the large number of customers and the paucity of barbers, would necessarily be a long time in coming.

Supper was ready to serve, and the moment the meal was over I went upstairs to bed—to sleep soon and sweetly, in spite of the fact that conversation in the bar-room beneath sounded surprisingly distinct—about as loud, indeed, as though the owners of the voices were talking at my ear. Morning brought explanation of the phenomenon—one of the flooring tiles just at the head of the bed was missing, and through the gap thus left the noise of the unseen talkers entered the room as through a speaking-tube.

On the following morning, which was Sunday, the weekly market was held at Pollensa. Very early, while it was yet hardly light, the little bustle of street traffic awoke me, and, looking from the window, I got a misty view of panniered donkeys and of rustic conveyances which vague shadowy figures were unloading.

When we had breakfasted we went out and, within a few steps of our inn, found ourselves in the most picturesque market-place we had ever seen.

I do not know what may be the leading article of Pollensa market at other seasons, but on this January day the outstanding feature was cabbages—of tremendous proportions. Piled in heaps and hillocks on the ground, they fairly dominated the market. Other wares there were no doubt, but the things that impressed us were the number and size of these giant vegetables and a feeling of wonder as to where the people would come from to buy them. As the morning wore on, the mounds sensibly diminished in height; but at that early hour the stacks of cabbages towered so high that sometimes only the heads of the vendors were visible above them.

In the raised portion of the market-square women occupied the stone benches, their stock of home-grown fruits and of the finer vegetables exhibited in baskets before them.

It was the scarce time for grapes. The field-produce was long over, and only garden bunches were still to be had. But without any attempt at bargaining we bought two pounds of delicious grapes for sixpence-farthing, and large golden oranges were offered us at twopence a dozen.

The town was so full of strange and picturesque figures that every moment brought fresh entertainment. At the *feria* into which we strayed at Inca we had thought ourselves lucky in seeing one old man attired in the curious *colsons en bufer*, as the voluminous zouave-like pantaloons of bright blue cotton are called. Here in Pollensa wearers of the delightfully odd old-world dress abounded. And it seemed as though they took a special pride in the quaintness of their garb, so particular were they about the set of their neckties, so trim about the ankles, so careful as to the fit of the low black shoes that went so well with the costume.

The women of Pollensa, though less extraordinary of aspect, were also a pleasure to behold, for with scarcely an exception they wore the becoming native dress, and their

heads were neatly covered with either the pretty white muslin head-dress or with handkerchiefs of gaily coloured silk.

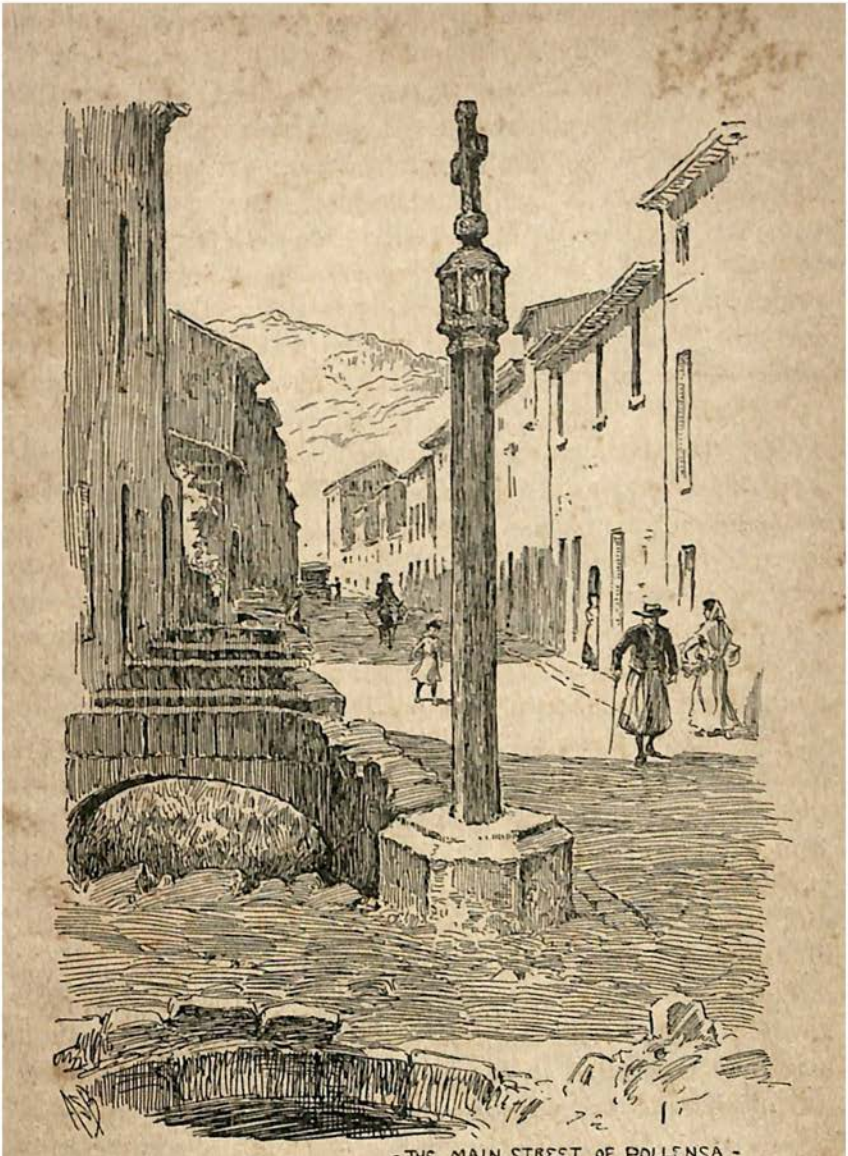
It was somewhat disconcerting to realize, as we did quite suddenly, that it was really we who were the oddities, and that in the eyes of the crowd, at whom we were gazing so curiously, I was a ludicrous object because I wore a hat!

It was really quite an ordinary travelling-hat, but finding that the fact of a woman wearing a hat at all attracted undue attention from these unsophisticated folks, I hastened back to the *fonda* and changed it for a chiffon scarf worn mantilla-fashion. That done, I found I could pass almost unnoticed.

Majorca boasts many picturesque old towns, but probably Pollénsa is the most picturesque of all. It is a beautiful antique: a town made for the painter. Its warm golden-brown houses have baked in the hot southern sunshine until they seem ready to crumble to pieces. It is by no means a rich town. Most of the dwellings appeared to belong to the poorer classes. As the Man said—"It is a city of slums—but what adorable slums!"

The streets were all turnings, and every turn brought a subject ready for the brush. Here was a grand old cross, there a curious fountain, yonder an ancient stone washing-trough. And round every corner, that market-morning, came the quaint old men in their broad-brimmed felt hats and baggy breeches, unconsciously adding the note of human interest that completed the pictures.

Pollensa is essentially a town of hills. Mountains closely girdle it round. To the Calvario, which is perched on a height in the midst of the town, one ascends by countless wide, low steps, the town ascending also. For on one side houses struggle half-way up the steep incline, while cactus plants, the edges of their thick, fleshy leaves heavily ruched by blood-red fruit, hedge the other. On the rocky slope beyond is a thick growth of *palmettos*, the dwarf palms whose inner stems the natives eat and from whose dried fronds baskets are made.



-THE MAIN STREET OF POLLENSA-

To the dwellers in these sky-parlours the broad steps play the part of an extra sitting-room. As we climbed slowly up that hot morning, we trod closely upon many domestic scenes, but none of the actors therein objected to the intrusion. Fathers were happily employing their Sunday leisure in nursing their babies; and mothers, with the requisites placed for all the world to see, were washing their children's faces, tying up their locks with ribbon, and performing other niceties of the toilet that usually take place in the sanctity of the home. One old woman, sitting full in the sun, was reciting her prayers in a loud voice. Her occupation, however, did not appear in the slightest to detract from her interest in the passing of us *forasteros*.

The open doors of the little chapel that perched amidst its guardian cypresses on the summit spoke a wordless welcome; and we entered, to find ourselves in a beautiful sanctuary.

Above the altar was a very old carved tableau which represented Christ suspended on a heavy wooden cross, with Mary, kneeling, caressing His wounded feet. On the ceiling were various curious and evidently antique emblems of the Redemption.

On either side of the altar was a recess devoted to the display of votive offerings. Many of them were akin to those exhibited in other churches, though one case was filled with tiny flat silver figures—miniature men in trousers and tiny women in petticoats. But on the wall of the chamber to the right was an offering that aroused both our interest and our curiosity.

Suspended in a tall, narrow glass case, hung a pleat of dark brown hair, tied simply after the local fashion with a knot and ends of black ribbon. It was a pigtail such as was worn by most of the women in the town; but a pigtail of such unusual length and thickness that it might quite laudably have been the pride of its owner's heart.

Beneath was a card bearing the following inscription, written large in a fair, round hand:—

Promesa
de Francisca
30 Noviembre 1902
Pollensa.

Now who was Francisca? And why did she promise to cut off her beautiful hair? Was it to avert the fatal issue of some illness of her own? Or was it because her lover was ill, or in danger by land or sea? Or was Francisca merely afraid that he might prove faithless?

Whatever the nature of the terror Francisca dreaded, it was happily averted. The presence of the severed tresses assured us of that. But it was a particularly fine pigtail, and the sight of it tempted one to wonder what the feeling of Juan, or Pedro, or Miguel was when he first saw his sweetheart with closely cropped locks, and found that she had shorn off her glory for his sake. It is to be trusted that Francisca's hair was not her only beauty.

From the terraced slope of the Calvario one gets a magnificent view of the town. Looking down on the tiled roofs, all tawny-brown with the passing of centuries, it is easy to realize the great age of Pollensa. The city itself occupies but a circumscribed area, so narrow are the streets, so huddled together the houses. There is scarcely room for a green leaf to sprout between them. But where the town ends abruptly the real country begins, and in the parts that are not closely flanked by hills the ancient town is girdled by a belt of almond-trees. And all about it the fertile ground is cut up into small holdings, each with its little yellow-brown dwelling-house.

On every side, as far as the eye can reach, rise mountains, a glimpse of blue sea showing here and there between their rocky crags. Above one side of the town towers an isolated peak, from whose crest a magnificent panoramic view of half of the island of Majorca, and even a distant glimpse of Minorca, can be obtained.

A superbly situated building that was once the Convent of Nuestra Señora del Puig (Our Lady of the Peak) crowns

the top of the height. It was so named because of a marvellous image of the Virgin discovered by the nuns who were in residence there. In olden days, when the building was in the possession of the Church, the Convent of Our Lady of the Peak supported an *hospederia* for the shelter of pilgrims; and now that the holy sisterhood has removed to Palma, the authorities of Pollensa continue to uphold their hospitable custom, and every traveller who mounts the steep—rather a stiff climb, by the way—is welcome to free lodging with fire, oil, olives, and goat's cheese for three nights and days at the expense of the town.

As we looked from the Calvario where we were standing across the valley to the noble pile of the old convent, and thought how sublime the sunrises and sunsets would be, viewed from Our Lady of the Peak, I registered a vow to make a pilgrimage thither some day. The Man chose to be pleasantly sarcastic regarding the fulfilment of the intention. He cherishes a perhaps not altogether unfounded belief that I wish to revisit every place I have seen in Majorca. But we shall see. . . .

As we passed back through the market-square, the business of buying and selling was still in progress. In every quarter of the town, down back alleys, mounting up the steps towards the Calvario, in the farthest-out streets, we had met women carrying home the Brobdingnagian cabbages. Dinners were already cooking over the little fires of almond-shells, and the odour of boiling cabbage came from many earthenware cooking-pots, yet the piles seemed scarcely diminished.

The cattle-market—a matter of a score or two of piglings, half a dozen sheep, a few horses—was held in the square before our *fonda*, and while it lasted the interest of the wearers of the *colsons en bufer* centred there, though, as far as we could judge from our balcony, they took no active part in the trafficking. They had all brown, weather-beaten, shrewd old faces, and all gave the impression of leading lives of extreme respectability. It was impossible to imagine any one of them falling foul of the law.

As the Boy said, "It would be a comic sight to see the old beggars flying from Justice in bags like these!"

Since our arrival on the previous noon, the personality of our landlord had greatly puzzled us. At first sight he had appeared youngish, stout, clean-shaven, and slightly surly in manner, and at intervals he still presented the same characteristics. But there were other times when he surprised us by seeming rather older, slightly greyer, and decidedly more gracious of bearing. The simple solution of the little mystery came when we chanced to see him in both aspects at once; and learned that we had two hosts—father and son—who, even when seen in company, so strongly resembled each other that we christened them the two Dromios.

In the afternoon we set off on the prowl, with the Town Hall—in which a native guide-book declared there was a collection of antique armour—as our objective.

The Town Hall, which in common with so many important Balearic buildings was originally a convent, occupies a commanding position at the head of a steep street. Reaching it, we found an open doorway, but no sign of any custodian.

We entered and wandered along empty passages and up a great staircase so old that the stone steps were worn down, and the lower balustrades had fallen quite away.

Still in quest of the collection of ancient armour, we had strayed as far as an upper and seemingly deserted corridor, our footsteps echoing loudly on the tiled floors. We were about to retrace our steps when a door at the end of the passage opened, and a gentleman appeared.

To our gratification he accepted our explanation of the intrusion, and courteously invited us to enter his house to see the views from his windows; for as official telegraphist to the town, he occupied a handsome suite of rooms in the old building.

His wife, too, showed no surprise at having three outlandish foreigners thus rudely disturb her Sabbath peace. She received us most graciously, and, having invited us to be seated, entered into conversation with the Man.

"We were from England, then?"

"Yes, but for the winter we were resident at Palma."

"Palma. So we lived in Palma?" Before her husband's translation to Pollensa a few months earlier, the señora explained, they also had lived in Palma. "In what part of Palma did we reside?"

"Well, not exactly in the town—just beyond the walls, at Son Españolet."

"At Son Españolet!" The señora confessed to having had a summer residence in Son Españolet.

"Our house is in the Calle de Mas—Number 23."

"In the Calle de Mas! Caramba! What a coincidence!" The señora's summer home had also been in the Calle de Mas—Number 26.

With this unexpected interest between us, we were soon all chatting away volubly, though, I fear, not always intelligibly. And when we bade the señora "Adios" to resume our quest, the señor kindly accompanied us.

With his aid we succeeded in unearthing an old woman who kept the keys that opened the treasures of the town.

One most interesting chamber held the records of Pollensa for many hundreds of years—from the earliest archives that were inscribed on parchment now brown with age, to the smart morocco-bound chronicles of the day before yesterday. The arms of the city—the three cypresses, the silver star, and the cock with a claw in the air, that had already become familiar to us—were there also.

Among the old cross-bows and halberds were the huge blunderbusses that, in accordance with an old custom, are still fired off yearly. And with them were specimens of a much older form of offensive weapon in the shape of huge rounded stones that in olden times had been hurled from the battlements of the Castillo del Rey, aimed at the skulls of attacking enemies.

Articles that were specially interesting, because in use to the present day, were the big earthenware water-jugs from which are drawn by lot the young men whom Pollensa

annually contributes to the Majorcan army. There must be anxious hearts, both inside and outside of the old building, on that morning in early February when the lads whose turn has come go up to draw from the narrow mouths of the Moorish jars the numbers that are to decide their manner of life for the next three years.

In the Council Chamber was a large painting by a native artist of Juan Mas, the townsman to whom belongs the honour of having first delivered Pollensa from the Moors.

Juan must either have been a *malade imaginaire*, or one whose spirit was stronger than his body; for, as the story goes, he was sick abed when the Moors reached the town, and leaping from his couch, without taking time to change his night-garb, he led the people on to victory. The artist shows the hero in what was presumably the sleeping-suit of the period—loose white breeches and a shirt.

We were back at the *fonda* taking tea when a sound of chanting voices in the street beneath drew us to the windows in time to see a religious procession passing slowly beneath. Priests in rich vestments, carrying banners, walked in front; behind in a double line came a long succession of females of all classes—women with *rebozillos* and pig-tails, ladies with mantillas. A band of little girls and nuns brought up the rear; and, still singing, the company passed on, and entered the adjacent church.

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XV

THE PORT OF ALCUDIA

ON being consulted respecting a conveyance that would take us to Alcudia, the younger Dromio had suggested the possibility of hiring one from a friend of his own. The distance was twelve kilometros, the cost would be about six or seven pesetas. So next morning, when we were ready to start, quite a smart trap awaited us.

It was after the fashion of the penitential gig in which we had journeyed from the Hospederia at Miramar to Sóller, but it was twice as large. The owner, who drove, had dressed for the occasion. He wore a sportive cap of green and gold tartan plush, a well-starched white shirt that was lavishly sprinkled with black spots as big as sixpences (no collar, of course), and he was smoking a cigar.

Bidding farewell to the two Dromios, who shook us by the hands with seeming regret and craved the favour of a recommendation to our friends, we drove away through the sweet morning air. The lovely road curved about the foot of the hill crowned by the old Convent of Our Lady of the Peak, and past many little holdings—one-acre-and-a-goat sort of places—towards the sea. The road was dry, but there was no dust, and the January sun shone warmly from a cloudless sky.

When we had reached the broad Roman road that led directly to the old walled city of Alcudia, our way led between countless ranks of great fig-trees—their spreading branches now bare and grey. So many were they, and so

THE ROMAN GATEWAY, ALCUDIA

wide an area did they cover, that, if we had not seen figs growing in profusion at other parts of the island, we could almost have believed that all the figs in Palma came from Alcudia.

Our driver was a genial man who had emigrated and made his money in Buenos Ayres, and while still young had been able to follow the worthy native custom and return with his savings to his native district, where he was now comfortably settled, farming his own bit of land and driving his own pony-trap.

When we asked his advice as to where we might stay at Alcudia, he said there were two hotels at the port, which is a mile beyond the old city. The Hotel Miramar was the larger. But the proprietors of the Fonda Marina were friends of his own. They were very nice people. He could heartily recommend them. And here I may say that one of the many nice features of the Majorcans is that they are almost invariably on friendly terms with each other. If a shop-keeper happens to be out of the commodity a buyer wants, he will put himself out of his way to direct the customer to a brother vendor.

Alcudia is a curiously old city—far older even than Palma, they claim. It has a distinct inner wall—Moorish—and many substantial traces of an outer one—Roman. Entering by the gate of San Sebastian—near which a much-chipped wooden figure of the saint is sheltered in a netting-protected niche in the wall—we drove through the corkscrewy streets and out by a gate on the farther side.

Before coming we had decided not to stay in the ancient city. Its sanitary condition was supposed to be doubtful, and we had failed to hear of an inn there. But when we had driven through the picturesque Roman gateway and past the antique cross beyond, we looked back, and the place seemed so enticingly old-world, so like a habitation out of another century than ours, that we felt sorry we had made no real endeavour to find a lodging within its walls. However, the recollection that we would have to start about 3 a.m. in a

small boat to get on board the Minorca steamer reconciled us to the prospect of living as close as possible to the harbour.

The Fonda Marina was an attractive-looking new house built at the very edge of the bay. As we drove up, the host and hostess, recognizing our driver, hastened out to welcome him. Before marrying and settling down as hotel-keepers, the husband had been a steward on South American steamers, and the wife had been cook to the former proprietors of the *fonda*. Both were pleasant, frank country folk, and terms were quickly arranged.

"We would like to stay here till the boat for Minorca calls, to-morrow night. Can you take us for three pesetas a day?" we asked.

"For three pesetas *each?*" the host inquired dubiously, as though he thought we had suggested his accepting that sum for the trio. "If for three pesetas *each*—yes, surely."

So, to the evident satisfaction of everybody concerned, the easy bargain was concluded.

The Fonda Marina was particularly bright and airy. Its windows overlooked the great Bay of Alcudia, from which, in olden times, expeditions were wont to sail for Africa and the Levant. These were the days when the kings of Spain built whole fleets from wood grown in Majorcan forests.

There was a drawing-room whose three windows each commanded a totally different point of view. It had a good balcony, and was lit by home-made acetylene gas. Our rooms, which were clean and comfortable, faced seawards. With a very long rod one might almost have fished from their windows. A more enticing summer residence could hardly be imagined.

Our hostess had promised that in a few minutes luncheon would be ready. And it was with lively curiosity that we awaited its appearance. The two Dromios had entertained us for the same sum; and we were interested to see how the catering of the Fonda Marina would compare with that of their caravansary.

Seating ourselves in one of the large halls downstairs, we

waited the turn of events. The mistress of the house had disappeared into the kitchen, whence frizzling sounds expressive of hurried cooking smote cheerily upon our expectant ears.

Presently a slim, dark-eyed young maid, Consuelo by name, hastened out bearing an armful of plates which she proceeded to set at intervals round a large baize-covered table near us. Then she added thick glass tumblers, a tall jug of water, and a large rye loaf.

"I say," said the Boy, "there are *six* plates. We're evidently expected to dine with the family. That'll be fun."

But his hopes of a treat were disappointed by Consuelo reappearing to invite us into a neat little dining-room whose existence we had not suspected. There we found a table nicely spread for three, with the elaborately monogrammed linen one sees in every Majorcan home, good cutlery, a bottle of red wine, and a siphon of soda-water.

When we had taken our places our host himself placed before us a large dish of *arroz*—the excellent native stew of rice mixed with anything savoury in the form of fish, flesh, fowl, or vegetable that happens to be at hand.

Fried fish followed—fresh out of the sea, and so delicious of flavour that we were inclined to question whether those caught in the bay of Pollensa could possibly be better.

While we were eating it, the hostess came in to ask what we would have next—whether we would prefer an omelet or cutlets. We unanimously chose omelet, and in a hand-clap one, hot and buoyant, was on the table. Oranges and apples and black coffee completed the menu.

During the meal, the solicitude of the family to see that we lacked nothing that would conduce to our comfort was almost embarrassing. The door of our dining-room stood open, and although the host and Consuelo, who served us, did not actually remain in the room they were continually passing the door with anxious eyes turned on our proceedings. And when a dish was removed the señora would come in person to inquire if it had been to our liking.

The climax came when the only child of the house—Cristobal, a dear brat of five—in his desire to see the eccentric strangers eat, crept stealthily up the staircase and stationed himself on his knees just opposite the open door of the dining-room, gazing down through the banisters at us. This ingenious little manœuvre was discovered by his father. There ensued a sound resembling applause, and young hopeful was borne off, howling, to be comforted in the kitchen.

Immediately after luncheon the Man walked back towards Alcudia to sketch the view of the sea-gate of the old city, that had struck him when we drove through. And, left to our devices, the Boy and I went boating.

A jolly, flat-bottomed punt belonging to the *fonda* was moored close at hand, and just across the blue and silver water lay an enticing stretch of lovely white sand. Behind it rose a bank of low shrubs overtopped by tall pines whose foliage had been so cropped that at a little distance they bore a striking resemblance to cocoanut palms. Beyond the flat expanse of land rose a line of mountains that glowed warm heliotrope and pink in the strong sunshine.

The still water was so clear that we could see every grain of the sand, every spray of seaweed, beneath. And as we drifted over the lagoon we felt as though the intervening decade had slipped back and that we were once again on the coral strand of the Pacific Islands.

I had heard that beautiful and, sometimes, very rare shells were to be found in the Bay of Alcudia. So, getting the Boy to put me on shore, I wandered along by the edge of the water looking for them. But my quest proved of little avail. Shells there were, it is true, but they were very small, very fragile, and almost colourless; most, indeed, were pure white and nearly transparent. I have gathered shells in many parts of the world, and I confess I was disappointed. Still, it was the only point on which Alcudia did not far exceed any expectations I had formed of it. The comparative failure of my search must have been owing to the long

continuance of calm weather. As the Mediterranean is almost tideless, it is only after a storm that wave-borne treasures are usually to be found washed up on her beaches.

Perhaps I may not have looked in the right spot, though I did wander a long way round the shore in the direction of the Albufera—the tract of marshy land where rice is cultivated. So far, that I was glad when the Boy, by skilful navigation, succeeded in avoiding the many sandbanks and could run the punt in and, picking me up, row me over to the *fonda*.

The Man was awaiting our return, and after taking a cup of tea we walked eastwards along the coast towards an old Moorish tower that we had seen from the distance.

The sun had set. It was in the mysterious half-light of the gloaming that we mounted the steps leading to the door and found it open at a touch. Within all was darkness. The flame of a match revealed chambers showing that the tower had evidently been a home as well as a place of defence. One had evidently been the living-room of the Moorish tenants, for almost half the floor-space was occupied by the wide chimney-corner, where a host might have gathered round the blazing logs. I never see an ancient dwelling without experiencing a keen desire to know what manner of folks were the first to kindle a fire on the deserted hearth.

Feeling our way up the worn stairway, we reached a floor with more empty and silent apartments. Two or three broken steps led to a cunning opening placed exactly over the front entrance. Besiegers essaying to storm the door must have fallen easy victims to the alert watchers above; and that wide hearth had room to heat an amazing lot of water. At either side of the opening were embrasures into which the defender of the fortress might dart after he had aimed his missile—scalding water, arrows, heavy stones, or whatever the fashion of his time in projectiles chanced to be.

Mounting yet higher, we found ourselves standing in the open air, on a flat circular roof overlooking the wide bay. On one side of the roof were two chambers and a draw-well.

The view from the top of this ancient Moorish tower was grand. The sun had long set, but the sky still held a thousand glorious hues that were reflected in the sea. No craft moved on the surface of the water, and not a living being was in sight on land. The whole lovely world seemed to belong to us. Allured by the romantic beauty of the spot, we lingered until the colour had faded and the sky had become so dark that we had to stumble our way *fonda*-wards over the rough field-track, vowing to return on the morrow to see the place by daylight.

Supper was waiting when we got indoors—half-a-dozen fried eggs served with fried potatoes, cutlets, cauliflower and cheese. A home-made sausage, a mould of *membrillo* jelly, fruit and coffee—an *outré* combination perhaps, but it was all very tempting and nicely cooked, and we enjoyed it.

Another of our charming Balearic days had ended. And so, as Pepys would say, to bed.

Our wonderful luck in weather continued. We awoke to yet another perfect morning. Immediately after breakfast the Man set off to sketch one of the countless curious antique Moorish wells—known as *norias*—used for the irrigation of the crops : wells whose chains of earthenware jars are worked by the motive power supplied by mules that, yoked to a long shaft, keep walking in a circle. The mule needs no guide, as the rein, which is tied to the beam overhead, at intervals gives a gentle tug in the required direction.

It was oddly pathetic to see the patient brutes, their eyes blindfolded by having straw saucers fastened over them plodding steadfastly round and round, while from the ceaseless filling and emptying of the chain of jars the water gushed in a miniature waterfall into the trenches dug between the long lines of growing vegetables. In this fertile plain near the sea, the crop at this mid-winter season appeared to

consist mainly of cabbages and cauliflowers. And when we saw those grown at Alcudia we knew where the mammoth cabbages that had dominated Pollensa market had been reared.

The Boy had gone alone to do a sketch on the roof of the Moorish tower that had interested us on the previous night. As he sat working, there came a sound of steps ascending the crumbling stairs ; and to his pleasure three pretty Majorcan girls appeared, come to fill their earthen water-jars at the old draw-well on the roof, a well that even after the lapse of

A NORIA NEAR ALCUDIA

hundreds of years still continued to yield an abundant supply of pure water. The girls were exactly the figures required to complete the sketch. So to their gratification and his own benefit the Boy put them in.

In the afternoon, the Man and I walked the easy mile to Alcudia, and wandered about the quaint old town, climbing both the inner and the outer walls, wishing we knew more of its history, and lamenting that our limitations of language kept us ignorant of the meaning of these extensive and variant lines of fortifications. So we made no exhaustive inquiries, but prowled about and drew our own rough conclusions as to

the relative values of the Roman and Moorish manner of building and defence.

Coming upon a handsome and imposing church, we went in. It was dark and silent. Straying through the outer building, which had a vast Moorish dome, we entered a curious and beautiful inner church, whose sides were lined with the nearest approach to private boxes that we had ever seen in a sacred edifice.

Returning to the outer church, we were looking at the decorations in the dimness of the side chapels. The Man had struck a match to enable us to see a grotto that was rendered still more obscure by half-drawn curtains. The sound echoing through the silence brought a lad, who was evidently intensely interested in the church and its possessions. Lighting a tall candle, he drew aside the curtains, and with something of the pride of ownership in his manner revealed to us the Christmas tableau of the scene in the stable at Bethlehem.

His glory in the display was so evident that we did not remark on the contempt for perspective that had represented the Virgin and Child as giants, and the worshipping kings and shepherds as merely pigmies; nor did we venture to hint that anything in the nature of an anachronism marked the presence of a gay satin cushion at Mary's feet.

The lad's soul was evidently in the work of the church. When we thanked him, and the Man offered him a coin in recognition of the willing services he had rendered us, he at first refused to take it; then, when we insisted, accepted and immediately put it into the collection-box marked "For the High Altar."

Our landlord had spoken of the remains of a Roman amphitheatre that was in the district; and finding that we were interested, he volunteered to pilot us thither. And, indeed, without his escort we would never have found the place, for it lies in the heart of a farm, the way to which leaves the main road half-way between the old city and her port.

A commonplace path between stone walls led to the farm-house, whose quite ordinary exterior gave no suggestion of the strange tracks of bygone races that lay hid in the ground all about. Having asked and obtained the permission that enabled us to trespass, we passed on and reached a rocky slope which bore signs of having at some time been used as a quarry.

To our unskilled eyes nothing seemed to promise that our surroundings would prove other than the usual Majorcan farm placed on a particularly rocky bit of country.

Our guide, who had been walking in advance, stopping suddenly, pointed to the ground at his feet.

"There!" he said.

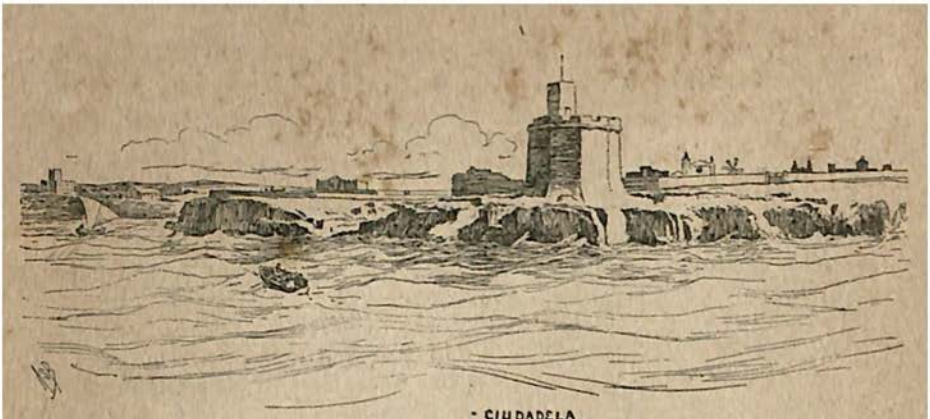
And looking, we saw that we were standing on the top step of a barely distinguishable semicircle that had been roughly hewn in the rock. With a beautiful disrespect for age, a stone dike had been built right across the seats. I think we counted six rows above and five below the wall. And in the arena flourishing almond-trees had rooted deep in the once blood-stained soil. A hole in the ground allowed a peep into a cavern where the wild beasts used in the combats had been housed.

But the ground held other secrets. In the solid rock that rose above the sides of the amphitheatre there were many graves—once sealed; now, having been desecrated by bygone generations of Moors, merely slits gaping to the skies.

About four years earlier a strange finding had taken place within a few paces of the farm-house. An untouched Roman grave had been discovered; and our guide, who had been present at the opening, described the scene in language so graphic, and accompanied by such dramatic gesture, that we had not the smallest difficulty in following the most minute detail.

He told us how, when the hermetically sealed top stone had been lifted away, the complete body of a woman, apparently young, lay before them, as she had been

placed two thousand years before, with a necklace of gold round her throat, earrings in her ears, rings on her fingers. And how, as they looked in awed silence, the body that throughout these ages had maintained a semblance of humanity, had before their eyes slowly crumbled into undistinguishable dust.



· CIUDADELA
SEEN FROM THE SEA ·

XVI

MINORCA

THE weekly steamer from Barcelona to Minorca was due to call at the port of Alcudia at 3.30 a.m. We went to bed, but not to sleep, for half a dozen intending passengers, five of them commercial travellers, had arrived by diligence from La Puebla, and the *fonda* echoed with unwonted noise.

When, about three o'clock, we went downstairs, the large hall was brilliantly lit, and men muffled in big cloaks and scarves were gulping glasses of hot coffee before leaving the shelter of a roof. In the public room beyond, some harbour-men and one of the never-absent carbineers sat smoking.

A nondescript being—faded red cap on head, bare feet thrust into hempen sandals—summoned by the landlord, appeared from the outer darkness and, shouldering our baggage, passed out into the night. We followed, and walking by faith, at length found ourselves standing on the pier, the unseen water lap-lapping at our feet, an increasing group of fellow-voyagers gathering about us.

Out of the dense blackness a boat with a lantern burning dimly at her prow crept beneath us and paused. Some one lit a match, revealing a short flight of steps leading to the

water. Descending with fumbling feet, we reached the elusive craft below.

A curious company we were, vague, indefinable, all closely packed together, and all silent. A priest, a party of commercial travellers, and a gaunt Moorish-looking being, who was wrapped from his head—on which, as we afterwards saw, he wore, probably to save bother in packing, a wide felt sombrero with a jaunty yachting cap set a-top—to his naked ankles, in a great white blanket.

There was no moon, and the paling stars gave but little light as the two boatmen, standing up facing the bow, moved the heavily laden boat across the smooth swart water. Urged on with strong, unswerving strokes, the boat moved away from the invisible land, the while we sat dumb, motionless.

I was just thinking that in something of these attitudes of utter and hopeless despair might the unwilling passengers of Charon endure the last dread journey across the Styx, when the Boy, who was sitting next to me, whispered, "Don't we look exactly as though we were shipwrecked people adrift on the ocean?"

Then the bulk of the *Monte Toro* loomed vaguely ahead, and as our bow neared the accommodation ladder the elder boatman, abandoning his oar, began collecting his fees of fivepence each (*dos reales*) for piloting us over the bay.

The illusion had vanished. We were everyday human beings once more.

Before we left London a Spanish friend had strongly advised us to travel second-class in Balearic Island steamers. He said the second saloon accommodation was justly popular with those who knew, because, first-class passengers being few, it was better placed and more commodious.

The Man has cherished a lifelong theory that when journeying by sea the best accommodation is not too good. But on this occasion of our crossing from Majorca to Minorca, as the weather was still tranquil, he allowed himself to be persuaded to put our friend's advice to the test. And the experience of that night was so eminently

satisfactory that it not only added to our immediate comfort but saved us much money in the future.

When crossing from Barcelona our first-class cabins, which were small and had thwart-ship berths, had been situated in the stern. The second-class cabin on the *Monte Toro*, which I shared with the only other lady passenger, was large, airy, and as gay as ivory paint, brass rods, and scarlet draperies could make it. It was right amidships too, had two port-holes, and berths that for comfort could scarcely have been improved upon.

The lighter with a load of pigs being still on the way, the decks of the smart little steamer were quiet. A pet donkey, covered with a scarlet blanket, was tethered under the sheltering boat deck; a glint of gold lace in the galley revealed the captain warming himself by the cook's fire.

When I entered the cabin labelled "Señoras," a pretty girl in a pink petticoat was standing before the mirror engaged in exaggerating the bulk of her abundant dark hair by padding it out with quite unnecessary "rats" and cushions into twice its natural proportions.

Lying down, I fell asleep to the lullaby grunting of the pigs that were being hauled on board. When I awoke it was daylight, and a glance through a port-hole showed that we were nearing a flat coast.

The pretty pink petticoat had already gone on deck, and putting on a cloak and hood, I followed to join my people in a sheltered corner of the promenade deck, from where we surveyed the coast that we were approaching with the deliberate rate of speed that characterizes Balearic Island steamers.

The general aspect of Minorca, the flat country, the white houses, the windmills, vividly recalled our first glimpse of Guernsey as we had approached it early one winter morning many years ago.

Ciudadela, which is the oldest city in the island, was the capital in the time of the Moors. It was to the rulers of Ciudadela that King Jaime sent his demand for the sub-

mission of Minorca. From our place on deck we could see Cape Pera, the eastern point of Majorca, twenty miles distant, where the young King and his knights kindled the huge bonfires that, by alarming the Moors into the belief that a hostile army lay encamped there ready to invade them, gained him a bloodless subjection. Ciudadela, which was the seat of a bishop in 423, is still the ecclesiastical capital of Minorca, though Mahón has long superseded her in all else.

The sea is rarely smooth on the Minorcan coast. It was within a short distance of Ciudadela that, not many days later, the *General Chanzy*, bound from Marseilles to Algiers, was wrecked with the loss of every soul on board with the solitary exception of one young man, whose escape was surely the most marvellous on record.

As we lay to outside the very narrow entrance to the harbour, the five *comerciantes*, who were preparing to go on shore, eyed askance the tossing cockleshells of boats that were advancing ready to convey them to land. By taking the motor-car that ran the twenty-eight miles connecting Ciudadela with Mahón, which is on the opposite extreme of the island, they would save three precious hours. With the prospect of a charming sail along the coast before us we did not envy them.

After a protracted delay the boats succeeded in approaching near enough to the accommodation ladder to enable the commercial men to embark. And they were off, clutching at the sides of the little boats, as with rueful faces they joggled shorewards over the choppy waves.

Our chilly friend of the enveloping blanket and the naked ankles, who was a deck passenger, had, as the Man reported, spent the night perched on a grating over the engine-room—a situation where he would surely be warm enough. Where he performed his toilet no one knows, but as we neared Port Mahón he appeared transformed from a shivering bundle into a dandy. Neat black socks covered his ankles, and his brown coat, orange shirt, and green velveteen trousers

revealed a nice taste for colour. His yellow-white blanket had disappeared, but he still wore his two hats.

Meanwhile the pigs, whose lamentations had rent the silence of the night, were being hauled, pulled, jerked, pushed, and dumped along the deck, over the side, and into the lighter that was to take them ashore, as they went raising their voices in shrill protest. As the Boy remarked, quoting Uncle Remus, "These pigs know whar dey come from, but dey don' know whar they gwine!"

As the *Monte Toro* steamed slowly round the low cliffs that seemed to descend sheer into deep water, so little sign of broken beach or of outlying reef was there, we could see how through the ages the restless sea had nibbled and gnawed at the edges of the cliffs, which in many places were deeply honeycombed, and even hollowed into caves.

There were no first-class passengers. The accommodation reserved for them just over the screw was vacant. Third-class included an interesting quartette of stubby Spanish soldiers, and one slim naval stoker, whose flexible movements and sportive bonhomie were in striking contrast to the stolid immobility of his companions. Possibly the stoker felt more at home on shipboard. Certainly he had all the life of the party; for while the others muffled their heads in shawls, and squatted on their carefully spread cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, he was never still, helping an overburdened young mother by shouldering her small boy and taking him round to visit the pet donkey, making friends with the ship's dog, or playing good-humoured tricks upon the others.

The sky was flecked with white clouds—the first we had seen for many days—and the houses scattered over the flat and almost treeless table-land were all white—gleamingly white, after the old russet towns of Pollensa and Alcudia. Here and there we could see one of the great beehive-like heaps of stones that the sailors have christened "watch-towers." Though Majorca was only twenty miles distant, we already felt in a new world.

There was something oddly familiar in the nip of the air. And while we breakfasted on a satisfying "home" meal of omelette, ham, hot buttered toast, and coffee, we recalled what we had heard of the lingering effects of British rule in Minorca, and felt inclined to give it the credit of the breakfast, even though the ham was served raw, and decanters of wine and jars of wooden toothpicks jostled our coffee-cups.

When we again went on deck there were signs that the short voyage was approaching its end. The bearded mate of the *Monte Toro*, who had made the trip in a red night-cap, had, with a toothpick behind his ear, appeared in a uniform cap, though he retained his velveteen coat. And the most stolid-looking of the soldiers, producing a comb and a tube of pomade, proceeded to make quite an elaborate toilet on deck. Still seated on his outspread handkerchief, he combed and recombed his hair, and greased it with extreme thoroughness; though it must be admitted that when it came to washing he contented himself with a cursory dipping of his hands in the water-bucket. His face he left to Nature.

The pride of Port Mahón is its three-mile-long harbour. As we steamed up its length the trim fortifications recalled certain of our own naval and military stations, notably Portsmouth. But never did Portsmouth show such a glory of scarlet-blossomed aloes as burned on the face of these fortified rocks.

Our first impression of Mahón was one of unexpected brilliance. Until we were well up the harbour the town was invisible. Then, as it came in sight with its dazzlingly white red-roofed buildings perched high on the crest of the brown serrated rock, the unexpected picturesque beauty of the scene filled us with surprise and delight.

Already the military influence that is so noticeable a feature of Mahón coloured the scene. Boats manned by soldiers were rowing to and from the forts on the opposite shore. Soldiers were standing on the quay as we stepped

down the gangway—for, happily, there is no need to land by small boats in a harbour of such accommodating depth. And as we followed the porter bearing our luggage up the rough twisted slope of the Calle Vieja—that old street whose haphazard construction is so different from the carefully planned new ones—we passed a group of officers going down. Throughout our stay in Mahón I do not believe we ever glanced up or down a street that was not enlivened by the glamour of a uniform.

There isn't a river or even a stream on the entire island, yet, in spite of the apparently limited supply of fresh water, the whole effect of the town, with its green shutters, red-tiled roofs, its pavements and carefully whitened houses, is that of extreme cleanliness. To judge by results, the pail of whitewash must be almost an equal factor in a Minorcan housewife's daily task with a broom or a duster. During our few days in Mahón we became quite accustomed to seeing women touching up the street fronts of their dwellings with a whitewash brush.

Minorca is said to be rarely visited by tourists, consequently it offers but small choice of hotels. The one we had been recommended to try—the Fonda Central—was a favourite stopping-place with commercial travellers. There could be no doubt of that. Their iron-clamped chests of samples lumbered the passages and stairway. Their sprightly presence filled the large principal table in the dining-room.

At a hotel that is popular with these gentlemen of the road the cooking is said to be certain to be good. At the Fonda Central it could scarcely have been excelled. The proprietor, a reverend-looking señor, superintended it in person. And his efforts on their behalf were heartily appreciated by his guests, the summons to a meal at the Fonda Central invariably falling on eagerly expectant ears.

"*Arroz* to-day?" I overheard one guest inquire as he entered the dining-room for luncheon. And having received an affirmative reply, he sat down, adjusted his napkin,

grasped his spoon, and awaited its appearance with an expression of anticipatory satisfaction.

The rooms were scrupulously clean, the table service brisk and punctual. Yet the house was hardly one that could be recommended to ladies. Owing to the popularity of the hotel, all the available space had been turned into sleeping accommodation; there was no sitting-room proper. One of our bedrooms that faced the street and had two good writing-tables made us partly independent, and we had a side table to ourselves at meals, but I was the only woman in a company that numbered over two dozen.

The beds were comfortable, but there were no bells in the rooms. When our chamber-man wanted to attract our attention, he did it by clapping his hands loudly in the corridor outside our doors. And when we wanted anything the Boy went downstairs and demanded it.

Going out to explore the town, we could not help noticing certain of the lingering effects of the British occupations which came to an end early in the last century. The windows almost invariably had the regulation English window sashes, and many of them showed white lace curtains or little muslin window blinds; and the front doors opened into passages, not into either *patios* or sitting-rooms, as in Majorca.

The British craving for sweets seemed to have proved infectious. At the hotel luncheon we had been agreeably surprised by the appearance of a sweet course, and the shop windows revealed a tempting array of bon-bons and of jams and pickles, commodities in which Majorca is sadly deficient. And one grocer had quite a number of tins of Crosse & Blackwell's Scotch oatmeal. Tobacco pipes, which are seldom seen in Majorca, were both in use and displayed for sale.

Wandering up and down in the short January afternoon we came upon many odd nooks and steep streets that had a picturesque character all their own. From the top of the quaint Calle de San Roque we got an extensive view inland,

-CALLE SAN ROQUE MAHÓN-

with Monte Toro, some eleven hundred feet, the higher of the two Minorcan hills, in the distance.

Down by the curve of the bay we found the Alameda, a charming little Italian-garden-like promenade, where on summer evenings Mahón society assembles. It must be pleasant and shady there under the trees by the cool water. Even in winter it was attractive, with its close-cropped low hedges and great clumps of the vivid scarlet-blossomed aloes.

Just beyond the Alameda is a great cistern, from which is drawn much of the water for supplying the town. And from that point mules toil patiently up the rock-sided slopes, laden with barrels of water for the solace of thirsty folks.

Next morning, while breakfasting, we arranged our plans for the day. The Man was bent upon going at once to sketch the town as we had first seen it from the harbour. The Boy and I agreed to ramble about during the morning; and after luncheon we all arranged to go in search of some of the famous stone monuments, respecting whose origin nobody appears to have been able to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion.

But before breakfast was ended the sky had become darkly overcast. We reached our rooms to find hail tapping with ice-tipped fingers at the window panes, to see lightning flashing, and to hear the rattle of thunder.

Our plans perforce being modified, we waited indoors until the storm had abated a little, then sought the *Ateneo Cientifico Literario y Artistico*, of whose existence the landlord had told us. The town, which has many cultured inhabitants, boasts three Athenæums. Two are for the use of the general public. The third, which we visited, is said to be the centre of literary and artistic Mahón, and is something of the nature of a club.

The Museum is open to the townsfolk only on stated days. This did not happen to be one of those days. It was to the fact that we were foreigners that we owed our instant admission. And while the storm raged without, we enjoyed

a private view of the many interesting things in the *Ateneo*, notably the old ware and natural history specimens.

A very fine private collection of marine flora is housed in the Museum, but it is shown only when specially inquired for, and we were unfortunate in calling at a time when the custodian of the keys chanced to be absent.

Among the pictures and drawings was a merciless but irresistibly amusing caricature of what had presumably been the English Governor of the date, riding upon a donkey. The nice young lad who was showing us round blushed a little when he saw us examine it. Though he did not say so, we felt that he would have liked to apologize to us for its intrusion in the show; but our withers were unwrung.

The members of the *Ateneo* were delightfully cosmopolitan in their interests. Besides the current Spanish papers the snug reading-room showed a comprehensive array of contemporary literature, from the *Graphic*, the *Studio*, *Review of Reviews*, and *Harper's Weekly*, to French, German, Belgian, Italian, and South American journals.

When we left the *Ateneo* the hail had ceased; and though the wind was still high, the Man hurried off to see what he could make of his subject, while the Boy and I strolled into the vegetable market.

The big open enclosure in the middle was empty. Round the covered sides women were sitting beside their little heaps of fruit and vegetables. After the prolonged drought from which the island was suffering, it was perhaps only natural that the supply of fresh vegetables should be limited. But with the recollection still vivid in our memory of the mountains of green cabbages that we had seen at Pollensa market, the stock appeared especially meagre.

The cactus, a shrub whose existence is almost independent of moisture, flourishes on the dry rocky soil, and the specimens of its fruit that, prepared in some way, were served at dinner on the previous night, seemed larger and much finer than any we had seen in Majorca. But even at its finest the prickly pear is hardly a thing to pine for.

One thing that struck us as a particularly charming survival of English tastes was the discovery of cut flowers—chiefly little clusters of roses—for sale on several of the stalls. And one woman offered us sturdy pansy roots for planting. Up to this period of our stay in Palma I had never seen either cut flowers or flower-plants offered for sale in the market, though, indeed, we saw them later.

The wind had been steadily increasing. It would have been decidedly more comfortable to pass the afternoon indoors, but we were determined to seek some of the countless prehistoric remains with which Minorca is lavishly sprinkled. And after an unavoidable delay we started. The delay, be it explained, was caused by waiting for the cleaning of the Boy's boots. The service in the Fonda Central had certain limitations. It did not brush boots. The night before, the Boy had put his outside his bedroom door, and had taken them in in the morning untouched. Before lunch he sent them downstairs with special instructions that he wanted them cleaned at once. But when luncheon was over and we were ready to go out there was no sign of the boots.

Inquiries brought plausible promises of their return in ten minutes—in five minutes—at once. But still they failed to put in an appearance. At length a peremptory demand for their return clean or dirty sent Pedro flying down the street, to hasten back triumphantly bearing the cleaned boots. They had been sent to a shoemaker's to be brushed!

From the deck of the steamer as we rounded the coast we had caught many passing glimpses of the great stone heaps called *talayots*, and imagining that they would be easily found, we rashly set off, without either guide or direction, in search of them.

After walking a little way along the San Luis road, which we had taken partly by chance, and partly, I think, because there the wind would be at our backs, we saw in the distance a large *talayot*, and rejoiced at having so quickly come within easy reach of what we were looking for. Our rejoicing was premature, for when we sought a path that would lead us

there we failed utterly to find it. On either side of the long straight road were high walls a yard thick, enclosing small stony fields. Beyond these were walls, and yet again walls. It was our first near view of Minorcan country, and the impression was one of stones, stones, and yet more stones—stones absolutely without limit.

The attitude of the few olive-trees within sight showed the prevalence of the north wind. They bent away from that direction, their foliage twisted awry, looking exactly like people cowering before a blast that has blown their cloaks over their heads.

The gale was waxing stronger. *Our* cloaks were blown over our heads, but still we struggled on. A peasant boy, on being interrogated, directed us to proceed farther, then take a road to the left. Hopefully following his instructions, we "gaed and we gaed," like the classic Henny-penny, until we ultimately found ourselves entangled in a maze of these same thick walls of stone.

And a maddeningly ingenious maze it proved. For as we wound about, the *talayot* appeared to dodge us, sometimes popping up before us, sometimes lurking behind; often seeming comparatively near, more often looming at a wholly unexpected distance away, and always encircled by these impenetrable gateless walls of stone.

Finally, leaving me on the lee-side of a wall—it wasn't really the lee-side: in such a wind there is no lee side; but they thought it was the lee-side—the men departed, determined to scale the offending obstacles and to get there somehow. After a time the Boy returned to free me from the brambles round which the tempest had twisted my veil and chiffon scarf, holding me prisoner; and to report that, after some climbing, the Man and he had succeeded in reaching the *talayot*, and that they thought if I didn't mind some rough scrambling I *might* manage to get there.

So ten minutes later, breathless, wind-tossed and earth-stained, with torn gloves and scratched boots, I too reached the goal of our desires, to find it nothing but an immense

heap of stones, with no trace of opening or any apparent reason for existence.

The Man, who, in spite of the decided opposition offered by the elements, had succeeded in scaling the top of the *talayot*, declared it to be merely a greatly magnified cairn, and there and then announced his adoption of Dr. Guillemard's theory that the primary reason for the origin of these much-disputed heaps was simply the need for clearing the fields of stones. I must confess that to me the really interesting thing regarding these vast memorials of a vanished race is the fact that, while everybody is free to conjecture, no one, not even the wisest, can boast the smallest knowledge of their meaning.

Just behind the *talayot*, separated from it by certain thick walls, stands another relic of prehistoric times in the shape of a *taula*, or table stone—one huge slab placed horizontally on the top of a massive upright stone. And while the Man held on to something with one hand and tried to sketch with the other, I sheltered from the blast on the farther side.

It was curious to see flowers blooming even in these conditions. Amongst the loose stones at the base of the *taula* the periwinkle was in bloom. On the patch of stone-littered soil we had crossed we noticed some small lilac daisies, their heads bent close to the ground. And all about the broad tops of the maze of stone dykes clambered the curious and beautiful clematis-like creeper that delights to luxuriate in the most arid position it can secure, and is said to pine away and die when transplanted to a garden.

The sole incident of our return journey was the sudden appearance of a cap, which, floating high in air, advanced towards us round a corner towards which we were battling.

MAHON, MINORCA

XVII

STORM-BOUND

THE Man had declared his fixed intention of taking ship for Palma that night, no matter what weather conditions should prevail. So it was with unfeigned relief I learned at breakfast that, owing to the violence of the tempest, the mail steamer we expected to travel in had been unable to leave Barcelona.

The wind still continuing high, there was some doubt as to how long we would be held prisoners. But even if the steamer direct to Palma was not able to run, we might return by the shorter sea route by which we had come, landing at the Port of Alcudia, and, after a night passed at our comfortable *fonda* there, taking diligence and train back to Palma.

A return trip in the steady little *Monte Toro* would have been a pleasure, but when we made inquiry at the shipping-office in the harbour we learned that the *Monte Toro* had already been laid aside for cleaning and that the *Vicente Sanz* had been deputed to take up her running.

The young clerk of the shipping company, who was muffled over the ears by the upturned collar of his astrakhan-trimmed top-coat and had his cap's chin-string in active service, shook a dubious head over the prospect of the *Isla de Menorca* being able to cross from Spain, not only on that night but for many nights to come. The prevalent wind, according to him, often raged for considerable periods. Once for two months, he solemnly declared, no mails had been able to reach Minorca.

We devoutly hoped he lied. Still, in case a grain of truth might lurk at the bottom of his gloomy prognostications, we decided to have a look at the cabin accommodation of the *Vicente Sanz*, which was lying a few yards away.

The black and grimy *Vicente Sanz* looked what she was—a cargo-boat that had been hastily adapted to the passenger service. One glance at her build was enough to convince even a tyro that as a roller she would be unequalled. Right aft over the screw a few cramped four-berth cabins formed the first-class accommodation, while the sailors' bunks in the forecastle head had been fitted up as second-class.

We fled the *Vicente Sanz*, convinced that only dire necessity would compel us to voyage in her.

The few people we encountered in the streets were huddled in cloaks and shawls, and the custom of muffling the lower part of the face gave the women something of an Eastern appearance. Perhaps it was due to the chilling effect of the weather, but to us foreigners the Minorcans appeared to lack the gracious charm of the Majorcans. Though we saw plenty of pretty faces, the girls of Mahón did not appear so universally attractive as those of Palma. The conditions of life are harder, the climate more severe, and the hard water used may have a bad effect on the complexions. There was no distinctive native dress either, and we missed it.

The blood of many nations mingles in Minorcan veins—Vandal, Carthaginian, Moorish, Spanish, British and French. Port Mahón was originally called after Mago, the youngest son of Hamilcar, brother of Hannibal. The passage of time is responsible for the corruption of *Portus Magonis* into Port Mahón.

The island, which is about the size of the Isle of Wight, has known many rulers. For several hundred years the Romans held it. About the ninth century it lapsed into the hands of the Moors, who possessed it until in the thirteenth century King Jaime, the Conquistador of Majorca, demanded and received its capitulation. Two hundred years later, Barbarossa, the pirate chief, having entered the harbour

by stratagem, besieged Mahón and captured it. Early in the eighteenth century the British took Minorca and held it for fifty years, until Admiral Byng allowed the French to capture it—a "misconduct" for which, after eight months of close arrest, he was shot.

To her social and commercial advantage Minorca was restored to Britain at the peace of 1763, only to be seized by France and Spain while Britain was engrossed by the American War. Watching the opportunity, Britain retaliated at the time of the French Revolution by retaking Minorca, which remained hers until, by the conditions of the peace of Amiens, the island was ceded to Spain.

"Well," said the Man, as a fierce gust blew us into the portal of the Fonda Central, "when I saw this place I felt grieved that the British had ever given it up to Spain, but I must confess that at this moment I'd gladly hand it over to any nation that would take a gift of it!"

In the afternoon the wind, though still turbulent, had moderated a little. We let it blow us out to San Luis, along a fine level and absolutely straight road that in summer, when the trees are in leaf, must be charming.

San Luis has all the outward semblance of a French village. Even the church looked French, and was light and airy, in striking contrast to the sombre church interiors of Majorca. The streets of the village were broad, and the roads leading to it were planted on either side with trees.

The whole atmosphere was so reminiscent of Northern France that it was no surprise on entering the general shop to be greeted in French by the young man in charge. He, as he confessed, had secretly been studying the language for some months, and he was evidently spoiling to try his new acquirement upon foreigners of any nationality. The French, which he spoke very fairly, but which speedily lapsed into Spanish, naturally recalled our first impression of the place, and we remarked upon it.

A bright small boy, who with his father was in the shop, explained matters. San Luis *was* a French village, he said.

It was named after the French king and had been built during the French occupation of the island. The site had been laid out and the church designed by French architects.

For the moment we had forgotten that the French flag had flown over Minorca, but the boy's words brought back something we had read of the fête Madame de Pompadour gave at the Hermitage of Compiègne, where the Court happened to be when the news arrived of the taking of Port Mahón. A royal fête, when fountains flowed wine, and ribbons and sword-knots *à la Mahón* were distributed to the guests.

While buying sweets in the shop, we noticed a glass jar of the black sticks of Spanish liquorice beloved of our childhood. And on a shelf was a row of genuine English cottage-loaves.

The wind had obligingly blown us on our feet out the three miles to San Luis, but we wisely drove back. Sitting snugly inside the closed carriage, watching the storm-harried crops and shrubs bend before the wind, while the sun beat warmly upon us, we agreed that, if one could only travel about in a glass-sided box during gales, life in Minorca would be fine. We fully realized the necessity for the houses being built of slabs of stone nearly twice as thick as those used in the sister island.

In Minorca, somehow, we did not feel quite so much aliens as we did at first in Majorca. The greatest prosperity the island had known had been under British government, and the native mind seemed to cherish a kindly feeling towards our nation. It was curious that while in Palma we were always supposed to be French, in Mahón we were at once recognized as English.

A few English words have been absorbed into the Minorcan language, as people seemed proud to tell us. But the only examples we gathered were "stop," "please," and "nuncle."

In the harbour, over the door of a small tavern that bore no other sign, we saw suspended a bit of a shrub. Remembering the white wand at the door of the change-house

in the clachan of Aberfoyle, we wondered if that symbol also had drifted across the seas.

It was with something of the sensation of marooned sailors that on Friday night we fell asleep, to awake to changed conditions. The sun shone from a clear blue sky. The sting had disappeared from the wind, and the air was comparatively mild and calm.

When we descended to breakfast, the young man upon whose fragmentary accomplishment the Hotel Central founded its claim to put "English Spoken" on its cards hastened to greet us with the welcome news: "The sheep 'as arrive."

Going down to the harbour, we found ocular evidence that the report was true. The *Isla de Menorca* had arrived and would sail for Palma at 7 o'clock that evening. Our friend of the shipping office was silent and despondent. The weather had disappointed him by declining to act up to his gloomy anticipations.

Going, under his escort, to look over the ship, we found her a great, broad, tubby boat. At small tables placed on trestles on deck the crew were seated at breakfast, tall bottles of wine before them.

The first saloon accommodation was gay in red plush. That was its only recommendation, for it was woefully cramped in point of space, and the cabins were placed directly over the screw. The second saloon, which was amidships, occupied far more room. The steward suggested the probability of my having the large and cheerful ladies' cabin to myself. On the previous night's journey from Barcelona there had been only one lady passenger. Greatly daring, we hinted that in the event of no other señora arriving, we three might share it.

When we had parted from our escort, leaving him, we felt assured, inwardly deploring the comparative calm, and ghoulishly hoping for a sudden change of weather, the Man went off to finish his much interrupted sketch; while the Boy and I walked up to the market-square, from which—Minorca having no railways—a constant succession of more

or less ramshackle vehicles acting as diligences left for the towns and villages round about.

Accosting the driver of the nearest, we asked its destination.

"Villa Carlos."

"And the charge?"

"Fifteen centimos each."

"When will the carriage start?"

The driver made the motion of the hands that takes the place of the Frenchman's shrug of the shoulders.

"When it is full," he replied, and we got in. A polite Spaniard joined us. A little delay, and he was followed by a girl with a market basket. The driver, after gazing to east and west, and north and south, without discovering sign of any additional passengers, mounted the box-seat, which he shared with two big sacks of potatoes, and at last we started.

Having jolted up a long long street of white houses, several of whose owners were busy with brush and whitewash pail effacing any traces of the storm, we rattled out over two miles of glaringly white road. Villa Carlos is a white town of small houses grouped about a big square of barracks on the top of a cliff, near the mouth of the harbour.

The situation is exposed, and as the wind, though child-like and bland compared to the icy blasts of the preceding days, was by no means asleep, we found our way down to sea-level, and rested on a stone bench in the shelter of a great wall close by where the water curves into the little bay of Cala Fonts.

The sea was purring at our feet. Between the fortress above us and that on the opposite shore, sail-boats, like winged things, skimmed past. Producing an unexpected box of pastels, the Boy began to make a rapid sketch of the pigmy harbour with its blue water and the half circle of houses that outlined its rocky coast.

It was amusing to sit there and try to picture the appearance of the various fleets that must have sailed by on victory bent. When Barbarossa, the pirate chief, flying Christian

banners to deceive the guardians of the forts, steered his eleven galleys up the harbour, he must have passed the very spot where we sat.

Although the scene was tranquil, there was a constant movement of life. Two women carrying sacks and small picks came and foraged among the rocks for tufts of grass or other green stuff. A military water-cart drawn by a white mule, whose harness was resplendent with scarlet tassels, moved by, attended by a party of soldiers in white fatigue uniforms, their bare feet thrust into sandals.

During a temporary stillness I caught the sound of a soft little crooning voice that harmonized sweetly with the murmur of the sea. It seemed to come from quite near, but there was no one in sight. Advancing to the edge of the bank, I looked down. On a ledge of the rock a few feet beneath, a little boy attired in sketchy garments sat fishing, and as he fished he crooned softly to himself, after the habit of contented children all the world over.

His piscatorial implements were even more rudimentary than was his clothing. They consisted of a few inches of rod and a shred of string. His bait was a skinny hermit crab that he had scraped out of some crevice of the rock. A poor bait doubtless, but I can assure you the catch was even poorer. Still, perched on his ledge in the warm sunshine, Enrique fished hopefully and was happy.

It was so delightful to be out of the wind that we would gladly have lingered. But the hour when the Man and luncheon would be awaiting us was near. Returning to the barrack square, which was melodious with the strains of a waltz played by an unseen military band, we got into a conveyance that was on the point of starting.

A young corporal of Engineers quickly followed us, saluting as he entered. He was a good-looking, reddish-fair man, a native of the island, and an admirable example of the educated conscript. Hearing that we were British, he called to another corporal of the corps who was playing with a dog near, and who, on being introduced by his friend, spoke to us

in surprisingly good English. Not only so, but he understood perfectly when spoken to, a much rarer accomplishment in a foreign language. He said he had been learning our language for ten months only, and without leaving Minorca.

I don't know who his instructor had been ; there are said to be no English residents in Mahón, yet the soldier certainly spoke good colloquial English. As we parted he amused us by saluting and saying " Well, so-long ! "

Another corporal having got into the conveyance—whose only flooring seemed to be a sagging mat—we started for Mahón. He, like the first, was a specialist in signalling and telegraphy. Both of these men struck us as taking their soldiering really seriously. They had each served two years in Madrid to learn their business thoroughly, and now had charge of telegraph stations on opposite sides of the harbour from each other.

On one happy possession Minorca must be most heartily congratulated. She has a most excellent British Vice-Consul. When we called on him at his house in the Calle Rosario (just off the picturesque Calle de San Roque), which was not until the last afternoon of our stay at Mahón, his reception of us was so cordial that we sincerely regretted not having called sooner.

Señor Bartolomé Escudero has many qualifications for the post he holds, and not least among them is a perfect knowledge of the language of the country he represents. Not only does the señor speak English, but it is his hobby to teach it to others who show a desire to learn.

It was no surprise to hear that on his visit to Minorca the late King Edward had made his Consul a Member of the Victorian Order.

From the bustle of departure in the hotel we judged that some of the *comerciantes* might be our fellow-travellers on the *Isla de Menorca*. But when we went on board and, having taken up a position on the promenade deck, were watching the passengers arrive, it was something of a surprise to see

all of them appear. The little man with the long trousers ; the bald man who performed surprising feats with wine-flasks, drinking with the slender spout held far from his lips in a way that held us fascinated spectators until he chose to set it down ; the beautiful being who, we were convinced, could travel in nothing less refined than perfumery ; the man who always, even at table, wore the latest thing in smart caps, and whom we had seen coming out of a *sombrero* shop—all were there. Not even the gentleman

COMERCIÁNTES IN THE FONDA AT MAHÓN.

who, during our voyage together on the *Monte Toro*, had used a dust-coat as a dressing-gown was awanting.

There was little stir on the quay. The departure of a mail boat from Mahón does not cause so much commotion as does a like event at Palma, where the long breakwater is a favourite promenade, and where everybody who has a letter to post seems to delight in rushing on board with it at the last possible moment.

Many young men have to leave Minorca to seek their fortune elsewhere. I wonder if they return to that rocky island as they love to do to fertile Majorca.

Just as the siren blew the first warning, a fine well-built young Minorcan hastened up the long gangway. A male friend helped him to carry his substantial trunk, and three girls followed closely. They had barely time to bid him farewell—one with a lingering embrace, the others with a warm handshake, before the gangway was withdrawn and water was widening between the exile and his native land.

For a little space he allowed his feelings to govern him, and with quivering shoulders wept unrestrainedly into his handkerchief in the intervals of waving it. Then, when the boat had rounded the horn of the bay and the beautiful city was out of sight, he put away his handkerchief, lit a cigarette, and resolutely turned his face towards the land of promise.

There were no first-class passengers at all. Our commercial friends, taking possession of the after-deck, formed themselves into an impromptu concert party, the little man acting as conductor, as with admirable voices they sang popular choruses.

Two ladies had come on board; but the steward, taking our hint of the morning, had given them a small cabin to themselves, as doubtless they preferred, and had reserved the whole of the large ladies' cabin for us. So once again we knew the luxury of travelling second-class on a Balearic Island steamer!

The voyage was pleasantly uneventful; and not rough enough to disturb us. We awoke to find ourselves entering Palma harbour, and to see the lovely land bathed in the warm glow of sunrise.

Soon we were in a *carruaje*, waving farewell to the *comerciantes* as in a band they walked towards their hotel. A few minutes later we had reached Son Españolet, had passed the house of our friend the Consul with its flagstaff and gaily painted shields, and were back again under the homely roof of the Casa Tranquila.

- AN INTERIOR IN ALARÓ -

XVIII

ALARO

THE shutters of the Casa windows had been left open that the growing light might awaken us in time to catch the morning train to Alaró, where we had planned to spend the day with two friends from England.

Looking out while it was yet dark, we were conscious of a lowering sky. The pocket barometer had fallen two points, and for the first time in many weeks we felt that the downpour which appeared to be threatening would be unwelcome.

While we dressed, the rain began to fall sulkily. It had been agreed that if the morning opened wet the expedition would be deferred, and having had experience of the thoroughness of Majorcan rain, I was half inclined to take

a gloomy view of the situation and stay at home. But the others pooh-poohed my fears and off we set.

The optimists proved to be right. When we entered the station at Palma the rain had ceased, and the sun shone out on the Squire and the Lady, who were in the act of alighting from the Grand Hotel omnibus.

The town of Alaró, which lies close to the base of the northern range of mountains, is connected by a light railway with the main line at Consell. Horses drag the single carriage up the slight gradient to Alaró; it returns by the force of its own impetus. At Consell the funny conveyance with its tandem horses was waiting to receive the passengers. It had probably begun its career of usefulness by being a tram-car in some other part of the world. Now a partition divided the interior into first and second classes.

Disregarding the suggestion of the driver, who followed to remind us that first-class was inside, we mounted to the top, where two long lines of seats were set back to back.

Our progress towards the still invisible town was slow. The efforts of the driver to induce the leading horse to put on speed by throwing stones at him happily proved unavailing. With something of the smooth motion of a boat on a canal we glided on through fields of lush grain in whose midst olives grew luxuriantly. The threatening clouds had vanished, the sun was warm, the play of light and shade on the mountains was glorious, and there was not a soul in sight. The deliberate mode of progress through the lovely country was so delightful that when the line ended abruptly where the town began we all felt sorry. We agreed that we would have been content to glide thus slowly onwards for hours.

But on alighting we found our interest in the surroundings for the time being subdued by a stronger and more insistent interest in food. Our seven o'clock breakfast had been necessarily scrappy and hurried, and our first concern was to find an inn.

The civil guard who had been awaiting the arrival of our

car was at hand. Applied to for direction, he not only recommended a *fonda*, but in person escorted us there.

The *fonda*, which was close at hand, looked clean and inviting; but its mistress, overwhelmed by this sudden intrusion of five ravenous and unintelligible foreigners, eyed us dubiously. She did not know a word of Spanish, and her husband—who was evidently the linguist of the family—was at Inca market. As she gazed blankly at us her children, from the eldest—a pretty girl in a red frock—to the baby, clustered about her, their faces reflecting the bewilderment expressed in hers.

The fact that the youngsters looked round and rosy and that they all held little branches of mandarin oranges hinted that we had come to the right place for food. Hunger has a universal language. The landlady's blank expression gradually gave place to one of intelligence. Before we left her she had promised to have a meal ready at ten o'clock; and comforting ourselves with that assurance, we went out to stroll about until the half hour of waiting had passed.

Wandering through the streets of the little town and peeping in at the open doors with the unblushing effrontery peculiar to the Briton abroad, we were rewarded by glimpses of many quaint interiors. In one, beside an unclassable machine, a heap of the thick fleshy leaves of the *chumbera* (cactus) was lying.

The owner of the house, a man toothless and shrivelled, but endowed with that aspect and air of juvenility that seems the heritage of age in Majorca, cordially invited us in. He had no knowledge of Spanish, but he had what was far more valuable—a keen intelligence.

Indulging our curiosity as to the nature of the odd machine, he ran off to return with a handful of macaroni; then darting into the machine house, he reappeared with a perforated bowl of burnished copper, and by signs proceeded to explain the process of pressing the paste through.

"But the *chumberas?*" somebody asked. "Were they the food of the mule who drove the machine?"

The old man shook his head. Evidently the motive power was not supplied by a member of the ass tribe. Returning to pantomime, he raised his hands to his head and protruded his fore-fingers after the manner of horns; then indicating to us to follow, ran out into the street, where we found him pointing down into an adjacent cellar, in whose depths two sleek grey oxen were placidly chewing the cud. So it was the oxen who turned the machine that made the macaroni, and it was the prickly foliage of the *chumberas* that their jaws were patiently munching.

The little town that nestles out of sight at the foot of the great range of hills is an enterprising one. Through the open front of a building in another street we caught sight of a fine dynamo; and being invited to enter, found ourselves in the presence of the electric plant of the town. As the grey-bearded superintendent told us, Alaró was the first town on the island to have electric light installed. Manacor was the second.

"And Palma?" we asked.

The superintendent shrugged his shoulders. Evidently the capital city had been a bad third.

The half hour of waiting had passed quickly, and even in the passing were we conscious that the landlady of the *fonda* was exerting herself on our behalf. For while we were gazing at the oxen the red-frocked eldest girl had hastened by carrying a big dish of fish.

On the marble-topped table of the dining-room was a huge black sausage, a pyramid of rolls, a decanter of red wine, siphons of soda-water, and a plate of a pickled plant that was new to us all, even to the Squire and the Lady, who had a wide experience of many countries.

We were in danger of making a meal of the sausage, when the little girl brought in a dish of the omelets that every Majorcan housewife makes to perfection.

The pickle had proved delicious, but all our little waitress could tell us was that it came from the sea. And we had almost reconciled ourselves to the idea that we were eating

seaweed when the explanation (which proved to be correct) that we might be eating samphire occurred to us. In England in Shakespeare's time, and on the Continent to this day, the tender young shoots of samphire, which grows on rocks by the ocean, are gathered, sprinkled with salt, and then preserved in vinegar.

A dish of crisp fried fish followed the omelets. Then came a second dish of fish, then an abundance of very sweet mandarin oranges, freshly cut, with long stems and plenty of their green leaves.

The moment of repletion having arrived, the men lit their pipes, and for a space we lazed. But a few minutes of indolence sufficed. Calling for our hostess, we asked for the bill. She was prepared for the question, and had the amount at the tip of her tongue—eight pesetäs.

Leaving our wraps in her care, we separated: the Squire and the Boy to climb the mountain called the Castle of Alaró, the Man to find a subject for his brush, and the Lady and I to prowl about and enjoy ourselves in a feminine way.

Our prowl first led through a part of the town where at the open doors women, and little boys with aprons tied about their thin waists, were busy making boots. I wonder how it is that the sight of a small boy at work always makes me sad. I think it is the thought of the immensity of the task he has to accomplish before his labour ends.

Once clear of the town, we sauntered along a path that crossed a field, and ended at a fine old mansion overlooking an orange grove. The trees were heavy with fruit, and the air was perfumed with the fragrance of the blossoms that starred the glossy foliage. A giant bougainvillea draped a complete wall with a mantle of royal purple.

The front windows were closely shuttered. Except for three dogs the place might have been deserted. But on making our way round to the back we found ourselves in the midst of the bevy of people—caretakers, gardeners, labourers, and their families—who live about and in a big country house.

The wife of the caretaker, supported by her half-dozen

children and an old dame who was presumably their grandmother, advanced to the wide doorway of the kitchen to greet us. From the vicinity of the stables and outhouses men and lads gathered, and stood a silent group, attentive to our attempts at Spanish conversation, which attempts, it must be admitted, were puerile.

We were merely asking if we might have the privilege of seeing over the house, but we failed to make our meaning clear. Calling her little dark-eyed *chica*, who was evidently the educated member of the family, the mother conjured her to translate; but the *chica*, for the first time removing her eyes from the Lady's hat and flowing veil, only blushed and hung her pretty head.

At our wits' end, we were reduced to helpless laughter, when comprehension suddenly flashed upon the mother.

"Sí, sí, señoras," she said, and trotted briskly off, with us close upon her heels and the children and the grandmother bringing up the rear, across the spacious kitchen, along a passage, and up a stair so dark that we had to grope our way.

Passing quickly from one room to another, she threw open the jealously closed shutters of the windows, admitting the light. The house was one of the many delightfully unpretentious country seats to which Majorcan aristocrats migrate during the hot weather. Everything was arranged for the sake of coolness. There were no carpets or curtains. The tiled floors and lofty raftered ceilings of the large airy rooms made it an ideal summer residence. The windows and balconies afforded beautiful and varied views towards the romantic mountains, across the fragrant orange groves, or over the far-stretching fertile plains.

The noble family, we gathered, had other homes: one at Palma, and yet another at Madrid, but still they liked to return to the house that nestled so close to the great frowning mountains.

When we left she sent the pretty dark-eyed *chica* to show us the path through the orange groves, and dispatched the

eldest son hotfoot after to pick us a gift of oranges from the trees whose fruit was sweetest.

Neither the Lady nor I was inclined for much exertion. Climbing a little way up the hill, we sat down in the shade of an olive-tree and ate oranges and gossiped.

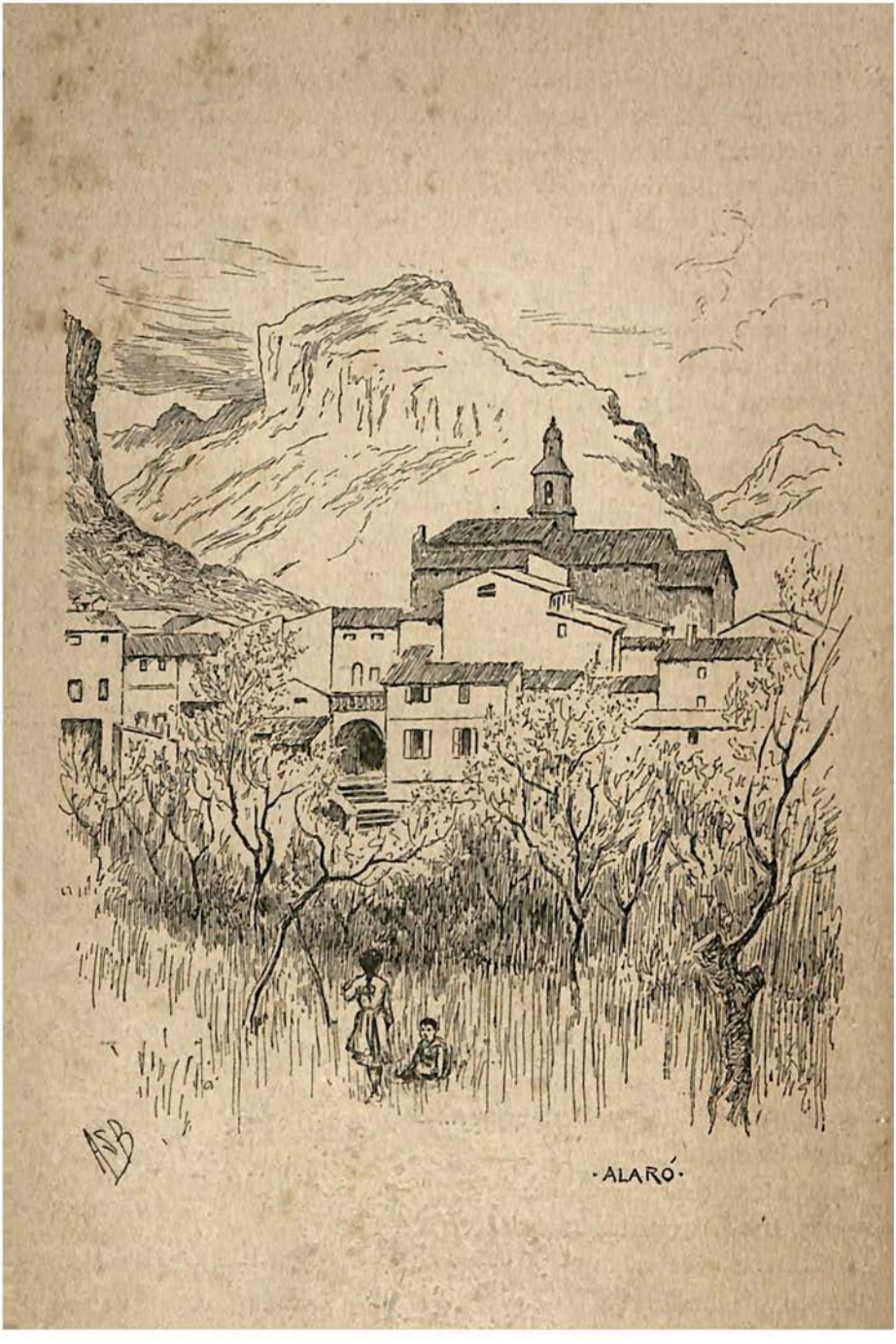
At our feet the ground slipped down into the valley, to rise on the farther side in the mountains, on whose crest we could see the remains of the towered battlements above which, in the seventeenth century, the two heroes Cabritt and Bassa kept the Majorcan flag flying, after the remainder of the island had surrendered to the usurper Alphonso IV of Aragon.

We scanned the hill-side in vain for any trace of the climbers. And while we lingered the clouds began again to gather, and scarves of mist hid the summit. The air had turned a little chilly, and we were passing the mansion on our way back to the town when we noticed a charming loggia that was built over a barn in which men seemed to be crushing olives.

Climbing the few steps that led to the open-sided loggia, we found it furnished with a couple of rush-bottomed chairs. Carrying them to the front of the balcony over which the gorgeous bougainvillea ran riot, we sat, under the row of bottle gourds that hung up to dry, looking across the wealth of rich purple blossom in which the bees were busy, and over the orange grove towards the luxuriant plain.

A shower at length drove us back to the shelter of the dining-room at the *fonda*, where the big logs that burned on the open hearth glowed a welcome. There the Squire and the Boy joined us, wet from the rain that had caught them when half-way down the mountain, but by no means weary. They described the path as having been a zigzag mule-track all the way. It was rough walking, but presented no difficulty whatever.

Near the foot of the precipitous part of the climb they had passed the first of the fourteen stations of the Cross, the final one being at the Chapel of Our Lady of the Refuge on the


·ALARÓ·

summit of the mountain. Each station was marked with an iron cross set in a rough cairn of stones, and each exhibited a pictorial tile representing the incident commemorated.

The rough mule-track had ended at the towered gateway, which was in fine preservation. Just within was a piece of smooth turf shaded by trees. The remainder of the narrow crest of the mountain was rocky and tumbled. Round the less precipitous sides were the remains of battlements and watch-towers. The side farthest from the plain was naturally so steep and impossible of assault as to need no artificial defence.

The views from the mountain-top they had found magnificent, and worthy of a much harder climb. To the north the great mountainous range that culminates in the double peaks of the Puig Mayor had barred the prospect; otherwise most of the island had lain open before them. Inca, Binisalem, Muró, and other cities of the plain were visible, and the bays of Pollensa, Alcudia, and Palma. The hills beyond Artá, the hill behind Lluchmayor, Cabo Blanco, and the outlying island of Cabrera were all distinctly seen.

The point that struck the climbers as curious was that, though all lay so clearly before them, the height prevented their being able to distinguish any sign of life or to hear any sound from below. The effect was almost as though the lovely land on which they looked had been deserted.

When they turned their attention to their immediate surroundings, the only sentient creatures they discovered were a small boy who was in charge of the chapel, a great eagle that soared overhead, and a few hens that clucked and scraped the barren ground outside the building that had once been the abode of some hermit monks, but which was now an *hospederia* in the care of the boy's parents.

In the little chapel was a beautiful statue of the Virgin, while the sacristy held a sad relic in the form of two ribbones of the brave defenders of the Castle of Alaró, who, after having been starved into surrender, were cruelly burned to death.

The chapel, perched up among the mist-wreaths and mountain eagles, was very small; so small that a large covered veranda had been added to the front for the shelter of the pilgrims who flock thither in order to obtain the forty days' absolution gained by the attainment of its summit. Just beyond the veranda is a sheer drop down. The prospect to be obtained from the out-jutting rock our climbers described as awesome.

They were half-way down on the return journey before the mist that had been floating about caught them in its clammy embrace. The ascent had occupied about two hours, the descent nearly one.

Bidding our hostess farewell, we went up the street to a café for afternoon coffee.

It was an unlucky hour. The schools had just closed for the day, and though the café was only a dozen paces from the *fonda*, we reached it with a train of children in close attendance.

Our demands for coffee with milk and cakes and *enciamadas* caused a flutter in the breast of the comely mistress of the café. Summoning her daughter Catalina—who was just seventeen and even more than usually attractive—from the corner where she was making pillow-lace, the mother thrust a large decanter into one hand, a big basket into the other, and dispatched her for supplies. Then she fanned the charcoal stove, placed a tall wine-glass, in which were two pieces of sugar and a spoon, before each of us, and retired behind the little bar to await the return of Catalina.

As we too waited, our attention was attracted to the window nearest our table, to find a row of small girls' heads, the eyes gazing fixedly on us, lining the bottom of the lower panes. As the moments passed the numbers increased. Girls with babies in their arms augmented the back row. Taller girls peeped furtively from the sides, and when caught affected to be engaged in reprimanding the curiosity of their juniors. Two little girls, who had arrived too late to secure any place, in desperation opened the café door and peeped

in. Needless to say, their boldness was rewarded with ignominious expulsion.

It was with something of the sensation of menagerie animals when awaiting the meal that people have paid extra to see them consume that we looked for the return of Catalina.

It came at last, and in the twinkling of an eye the milk was emptied from the decanter into a tin pannikin and set on the fire; and the contents of her basket—which proved to be neither *enciamadas* nor cakes but rather limp *bizcochos* —were heaped on a dish on the table before us.

The children who had been so lucky as to secure front places to see the lions fed got good value. We were all thirsty; the coffee-pot was kept busy, the pile of *bizcochos* steadily diminished. When we had finished and went over to where Catalina had modestly resumed her lace weaving, the spectators changed their window the better to accommodate their desires to the altered conditions. When we said good-bye and left they accompanied us—babies and all. One gipsy-looking child ran in front, glancing back at us. The rest trotted in our wake, making occasional momentary delays to call round corners and into doorways for their friends to come and see the wild beasts.

When the circus, as the Squire called it, had reached the outskirts of the town, many of our adherents fell away. But a staunch band of eight or ten remained faithful, and not only escorted us on our walk and back to the car station, but whiled away the time by chanting and performing dances for our better entertainment, one male infant, known phonetically as *Tomeow*, gravely turning a succession of somersaults before us, and we wondered if the religious dances that are annually performed in the church on the feast of San Roch, the patron saint of the town, which occurs on the 16th of August, accounted for their rudimentary knowledge of the art.

Constant to the last, they formed a semicircle about us while we awaited the departure of the train, which took the

place of the tram-car in which we had arrived, and listened wide-eared as we chatted with a corporal of the Civil Guard.

"The children of Alaró seem good," remarked the Lady, who has the gift of saying graceful things.

"Good—perhaps," allowed the corporal, frowning disapprovingly at our satellites, "but curious!"

There was no possible repetition of our delightful canal-boat cruise of the morning. Night had fallen when we began the return journey in one of the smallest railway carriages in existence.

When we reached Palma rain was falling, and the view from the carriage window, of a wet platform with the lamp-light falling on dripping umbrellas, vividly recalled the moist far-off land of our birth.

But a few hours later, when we left the Grand Hotel, where we had dined, the stars were shining above the dimly lit mediæval streets. Palma was herself again.

· IN THE DRAGON'S CAVE ·

XIX

THE DRAGON CAVES AND MANACOR

MAJORCA has two groups of stalactite caves that are reputed to rank among the finest in Europe —the Dragon Caves at Manacor, and the Caves of Artá which are near the most easterly point of the island and far from a railway.

Life at the Casa Tranquila was so pleasant that none of us really wished to leave it; yet a sense of duty urged that these sights must not be ignored. At first we thought of visiting one or other of the series of subterranean wonders, but opinion seemed so equally divided as to which was the finer that, in perplexity, we finally decided to see both and judge for ourselves.

The weather favoured our reluctant departure. The sun had just risen into a cloudless blue sky when the bells of

Bartolomé's chariot jingled at the door, and with the crumbs of a hasty breakfast still clinging to our lips we hurried stationwards to catch the morning train for Manacor.

We had spoken of going first to Artá, and a day or two later returning to Manacor and the Dragon Caves; but on the journey we made a chance acquaintance that had the effect of changing our plans. Two Englishmen, arrived that morning from Barcelona and giving five days to a rapid survey of the island, were going to the Dragon Caves. It was quickly arranged that we should view them in their congenial company.

As a place to stay at in Manacor our Majorcan friends had recommended the Fonda Feminias, and there we went on arrival, to eat an early lunch and secure rooms for our return.

The *fonda*, which has an architecture peculiarly its own, is situated right in the centre of the town. The large loggia, off which most of the sleeping apartments open directly, overlooks the fine church that is the pride of Manacor. My room, which was on the floor beneath, had a nice little sitting-room attached. I mention this specially because a lack of sitting-rooms is usually the weak point of Balearic *fondas*. The charge, arranged on arrival, was four pesetas a day, including the little breakfast.

Lunch was quickly served in a large dining-room that was as quaintly original as the rest of the house. It had ten doors, four corner cupboards, and no windows. Light was admitted through two small cupolas in the roof.

No time was lost. When we had eaten, a carriage was waiting to convey us to the caves. Just at the moment of starting a man, appearing from nowhere, silently seated himself on the box. He turned out to be the guide for the caves, an indispensable individual.

The road to the coast, for one that was neither particularly steep nor crooked, was amazingly uncomfortable to drive over. Cruel patches of the sharp stones with which the roads are mended scarred the way. We bounced here, and bounced there; now surmounting an acclivity and catching

a glimpse of the blue sea, now dipping into a hollow. It was a gratuitously bad road; evil alike for driving, walking, or cycling over.

When we reached Puerto Cristo the carriage drew up beside two empty vehicles at the back door of a little *fonda* that is said to be famed for its omelets and its pretty girls.

Passing through a room where a table was set for lunch, we reached a trellised enclosure overlooking a charming little cove on whose waters a boat was sailing

The silent guide, who had lingered indoors to prepare his acetylene lamps, appeared with them already lit; and, following in his wake, we set off, past a few fisher houses in whose doorways sun-tanned boys were baiting lines, across a bridgelet that spanned a slender arm of the sea, and up a rough track over a moor so brown and bare that it might have been in Devon. Judging by outward appearance, it was the last place where one would have anticipated finding a cave of even the smallest dimensions.

As we went we met two parties of Spaniards who had been seeing the caves and were now returning. It was for them that the carriages waited and the omelets were being prepared at the *fonda* of the three pretty girls.

Just as we were wondering if our taciturn guide would ever consent to humour us by producing a cave, he headed for an opening in a stone wall. Entering, we were confronted with a barred window and a locked door set in the side of a slope.

Producing a key, the guide unlocked the door, then when we were all inside he carefully re-locked it. A breath of warm exhausted air met our faces. The guide, still preserving his impenetrable reserve, removed his coat, and the Boy, fortunately remembering the advice of an experienced friend, counselled us to follow his example. An hour and a half of hard going was before us. The temperature, which was high even in the entrance hall, was likely to increase as we got farther underground. So the men in shirt-sleeves

and myself in a thin net blouse meekly pursued our dumb conductor down a flight of roughly cut steps that seemed to lead right into the bowels of the earth.

Walking in advance, the guide flashed his light upon all sorts of varied wonders, from caverns so hideous and grimy that they looked as though coated with the refuse of a coal mine, to banks of glittering crystals or stalactites of glistening semi-transparent amber.

At one point he drew aside, and stood mutely pointing in advance. Thinking he meant us to move on, I was walking forward, when he drew me back just in time to prevent my stepping into a lake so clear and pellucid as to be absolutely imperceptible.

That was the beginning of the water effects that lend enchantment to the Caves of the Dragon. The Dragon himself is but a poor thing, diminutive and wholly unworthy his surroundings. We saw him. He was pointed out, sneaking up a pillar, a truly undignified position for any creature owning the romantic and awe-inspiring cognomen of dragon. And, speaking confidentially, the humble name of lizard would suit him better.

The lakes and pools are indisputably lovely, and the charm of the Cave of Delights quite roused our enthusiasm. Imagine an azure lake overhung by myriads of glistening pendants. Near the centre a low pile of stalagmites suggestive of a fortress rose out of the water; from the miniature fortress extended a reef in the form of a cross. Stepping thereon, the guide set fire to a piece of ribbon which illumined the farthest recess of the cave, revealing new and unguessed beauties, and rendering the scene one of almost supernatural loveliness.

Then came more caves and yet more. Up steps we went or down steps, getting hotter and hotter in these airless depths as in single file we "ducky-daidled" after our laconic conductor. Once, deep in some gruesome cavern, he announced that the name of the place was the Cave of the Catalans, and in reply to our question explained, with

something of animation in the recital, that some years ago, before the entrance to the caves was guarded by lock and key, two young visitors from Spain had conceived the idea of exploring the caves without the aid of a guide. Twenty-seven hours later they were discovered in that repellent spot, deep in a dismal subterranean passage.

It must have been soon after hearing this suggestive story that some one asked the guide if he could find his way out without a light. And when he confessed that he could not, we all secretly wondered how long the gas in the lamps we carried was calculated to burn; but we were all too considerate of the feelings of each other to express our thoughts.

It was distinctly reassuring to remember that if the worst had befallen, if the man on whose guidance we trusted had been seized with illness or had met with an accident and the lamps had gradually flickered out, all we need do would be to sit down and wait; for the driver of our carriage, finding we did not return, would have routed out another guide, and we would soon have seen the lights of the search party gleaming among the pendants and pillars.

At one point we were refreshed with water from a cleft in the rocks, served in a tumbler that was kept inverted over a conveniently placed stalagmite. Then we resumed the tramp. The sights seemed to be endless, and one of the best—the Lake of Miramar—was reserved for the last. About fourteen years ago this extensive waterway was made the subject of special exploration by M. Martel, the French expert. With the aid of a collapsible boat he spent a week in investigation, and at its close was obliged to leave the farthest reaches of the caves yet unexploited.

Hot, clammy and tired, we had returned to the cooler air, and, resting upon the stone benches within the doorway, were refreshing ourselves with tea hot from a Thermos bottle, when the guide, suddenly dropping the mantle of reserve that had cloaked his pilotage, told us the story of the discovery of the Dragon's Caves.

As he sat, a *coca* in one hand, a square of chocolate in the other, he became almost loquacious for so taciturn a being. The history proved curiously limited for such remarkably extensive caverns.

It began one wet day about thirty years earlier, when his father, who had been out shooting, took shelter in a cleft of the rocks to eat his breakfast. Happening to drop a loose pebble through a chink in the ground, he was surprised to hear by the sound that it had fallen into a cavity of unexpected dimensions. That accidental observation led to the research that opened the Dragon's Caves to the admiration of a curious world.

Clothed and cool, though dusty and soil-stained, we regained the open air, where a group of small orchid plants growing beside the path attracted us. They were the fly orchis, and unusually perfect specimens. The neatest, most insect-like little flies I have ever seen poised amid the green leaflets on the slender stems.

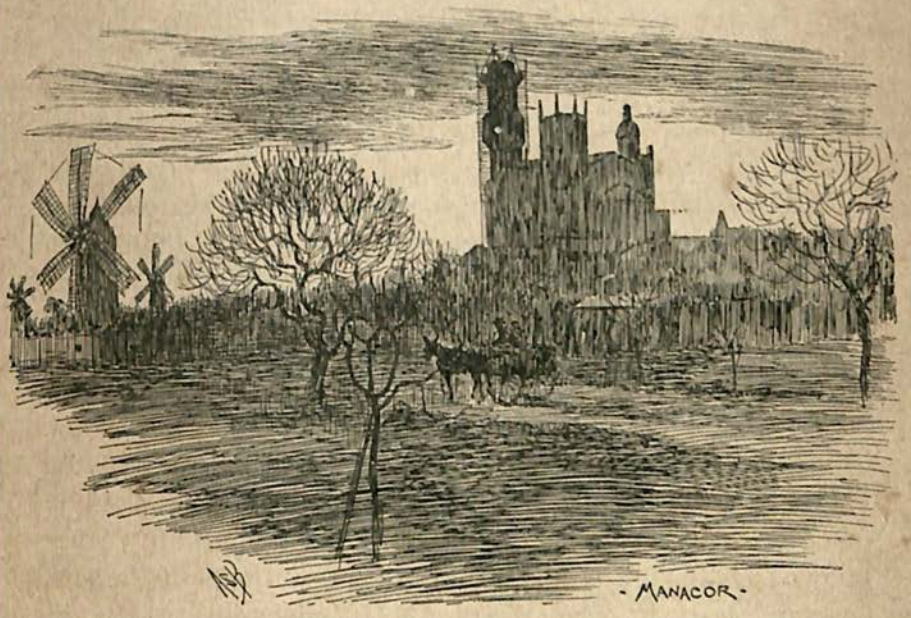
A glorious sunset was flooding the sky with colour as we lurched towards Manacor over the brutal road. The tall towers of the church of this city of the plain stood out sombre and imposing against glowing roseate banks of cloud.

We had been discussing the puzzling appearance of the building, which had a faint resemblance to the Russian style of ecclesiastical architecture, and none at all to any other known school. Scaffolding still encircled the high steeple, and as we drew near the church it appeared as though exciting operations were in process. A constant stream of people entering the edifice was jostled in the passing by a rush of men, lads and boys, who were hurrying out propelling or dragging hand-carts and trolleys laden with blocks of stone, of which heaps were already piled about the exterior of the church.

A useful rule in travelling, if you want to see what is going on, is to follow the crowd. Moving with the throng into the church, we stood astounded at the scene of destruction before us.

The interior of the lofty building was a riot of wild commotion. The air was full of fine dust. By the light of the lanterns which showed dimly through the obscurity, we saw the great white dome rising to the sky; and on the floor beneath, two huge pyramids of broken stone and mortar.

On the crest of the mounds vague figures were visible, working with almost feverish energy to remove the vast heap of *débris*. The air was vocal with the noise indispensable to violent and concerted action. And the raucous sound of the



wheels grinding on the stone floor as a willing band seized each laden truck to propel it out of the church added to the unholy din.

The whole scene was so unexpected, so foreign to the manners of the twentieth century, that to our bewildered minds it almost appeared as though history had slipped back and we had become spectators of some iconoclastic mob engaged in the sacking of the church.

It was a relief to find the labour sanctioned by the

presence of priests, who looked with benign approval at the frenzied efforts of the workers.

One of the number, seeing that we were strangers, and probably guessing at our bewilderment, kindly approached, and, with quiet pride illumining his fine old face, volunteered an explanation of the exciting scene before us.

The clergy of Manacor, seeing the need of enlarging their already important church, had appealed to the people. The people promptly agreed to help, and the work of extension was quickly proceeded with, the labour being entirely local, even the statues that adorned the niches having been carved by one of the priests.

The walls of the new church, gradually rising, enclosed the ancient building, in which service continued without intermission to be conducted. When the new walls were complete, the floor of the edifice was thickly covered with pine branches; and after Mass had been celebrated on the very morning of our arrival at Manacor, the ancient walls that had so well served their purpose were pulled down.

After the inevitable blinding dust had settled a little, the labour of clearing away the *débris* began. And we had returned from the Dragon Caves just in time to witness the multitude of helpers exerting their utmost strength to restore by lamplight the interior of the church from chaos to order.

When we first viewed the scene of demolition the labour required appeared so herculean that it seemed as though toil that was merely human could make but little impression. But four hundred willing hands can accomplish marvels, and when we returned two hours later one great mound had been mostly cleared away, and the other was visibly diminished.

With unabated enthusiasm the work was proceeding. When roused to their utmost effort there is no lassitude about these sturdy Majorcans. Strapping lads, shouting the while, seized each laden barrow and dashed off to empty it outside. Small boys imagined they were helping by pushing behind with an admirable assumption of strength,

and adding their shrill voices to the clamour. Some of the smallest, with an air of importance, carried out single stones.

Near where we stood a hole had been opened in the floor, and into the vacuum beneath a band of youthful assistants was emptying baskets of small stones and dust.

Most of the labourers were of the thick-set Majorcan type, but at regular intervals a tall handsome young man—a veritable son of Anak—clad in a pink shirt, light blue trousers, and a wide felt hat, appearing out of the mist, advanced to the edge of the gaping hole and discharged into it the contents of a large basket of rubbish. He seemed to work alone, speaking to no one, and moving with the silent precision of a machine.

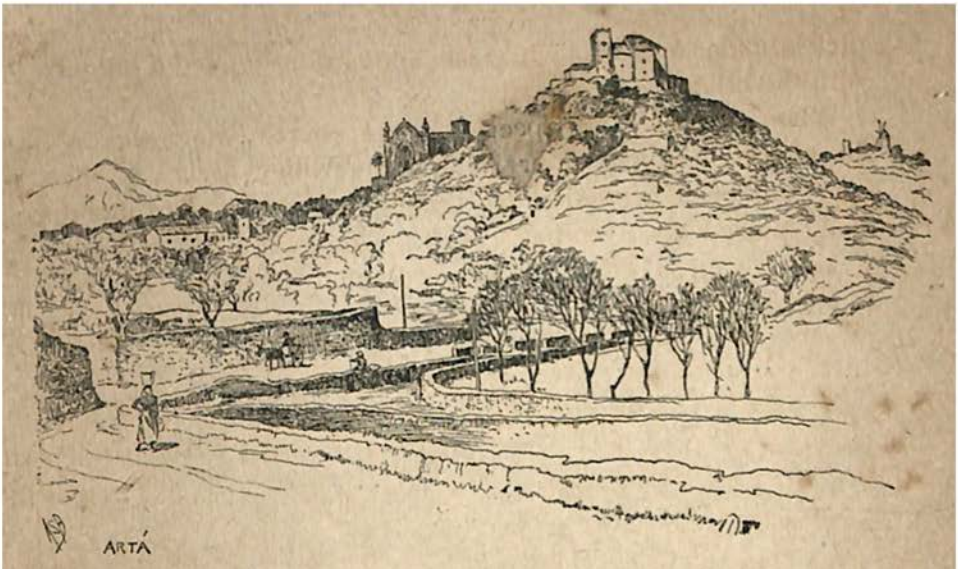
The women kept strictly aside, taking no part in the work. In dark corners of the ancient chapels that had been left untouched a few black-robed old women knelt in prayer. And near us a group of pretty girls stood tittering and whispering. At one moment human nature proved too much for some of the youths who had been passing us in relays, bearing on their heads great bundles of the pine branches that had been laid down for the preservation of the flooring. Making a species of organized sortie, they rushed towards the girls, brushing their faces with the ends of the dusty greenery. The girls, giggling and squeaking, fled before the onslaught, but soon stole back to resume their position as spectators.

When work ceased for the night an incredible change had taken place in the interior of the church. And next morning, as we dressed, the sound of boys' voices chanting came in through our open windows. The people were already worshipping in their new church. For one evening only had service been suspended.

During the labours of the previous night the women had perforce remained quiescent. It was now their turn to help. Active females carrying brooms were to be seen hastening through the sacred portals, to emerge later vigorously sweeping clouds of dust before them. One small girl had a baby

tucked under one arm, while she industriously plied a broom with the other.

When we took a final › into the church before seeking the afternoon diligence fc Artá, the yawning fissure in the floor had been cemented over, and rows of benches stood ready placed for evening service. An inconsiderable heap of rubbish in a side aisle was all that remained of the apparent desolation of the day before.



ARTÁ

XX

ARTÁ AND ITS CAVES

WE met the diligence for Artá at Manacor station, where the single-line railway ends on a track so grass-grown as to suggest that it had, inadvertently, strayed into a field. Were the engine to diverge a yard or two from the rails it would wreck the stationmaster's goat, make havoc of his family washing, and devastate his prickly-pear patch.

The Artá diligence, a spacious vehicle, supplied with good horses and a capital driver, leaves the station yard immediately after the arrival of the afternoon train from Palma. Should a sufficiency of passengers arrive by the morning train, a diligence would start then also; but the afternoon coach is a certainty. The distance is 20 kilometros, and the fare is three reales (sevenpence-halfpenny).

The Man and I had secured the front seats. The Boy was inside with a typical set of travellers by diligence—a priest, a soldier, one of the very new recruits who had a six days' leave to visit his home; a specimen of the pleasant elderly countryman who is the inevitable accessory of such a

journey, and two commercial travellers that we stopped to pick up as we passed a draper's shop in town.

Our driver was a man of decision. Little time was lost over starting. Five minutes after the train had entered the station we dashed out of it at a pace that threatened to make the distance between us and Artá seem far too short.

It was a perfect evening for driving. There was no wind, and the rain of the previous night had laid the dust. The road was a good one, broad and level—very different from that over which we had bumped and joggled on the previous day. The sinking sun cast a glamour over a land that was at any time beautiful. The swift motion was gloriously exhilarating. Perched up on the box seat, the Man and I felt radiant with the sheer joy of being alive as we drank in the sweet bean-scented air, and watched the approach of the picturesque groups of farm folk who were returning townwards from their day's work in the fields. Our driver, Canet by name, seemed to be popular. Sunburnt faces looked up to smile him a greeting. Laughing girls crowded into ramshackle carts exchanged gay repartee in the passing.

As we drove onwards the surroundings became less flat, and in the distance a range of sugar-loaf hills—the mountains of Artá—appeared. About half-way on the journey we jingled through a nice little town, San Lorenzo, where grape-vines grew on the walls of the houses that lined the narrow streets, and old, old wives sat on the doorsteps taking their ease.

Beyond San Lorenzo hills rose about us, and the road ran between tracts of uncultivated ground. Here, too, the road was busy with returning labourers in delightfully quaint groups. Many of the men wore their blue cotton shirts outside, like blouses, and all wore wide-brimmed hats of straw or felt.

Each family party was accompanied by an animal—an ass or an ox, a goat or a black pig. What struck us as being funniest of all was to see the understanding way in which, in

every instance, the pigs trotted sedately beside their owners, exactly like well-bred dogs.

Then the road rose high between pine woods whose undergrowth was thick with the withered blossoms of heath, and we traversed a mountain pass up which the men walked, before rattling inspiritingly down the farther side.

We were still some distance from the town, and the wayfarers we overtook had their faces turned towards it, when it became quite dark—too dark to distinguish anything except vague outlines of mountains.

Leaving the smooth white road along which we had sped so bravely, we entered a narrow street thickly strewn with a misery of sharp jagged stones that made advance a penitential progress for both man and beast. And Canet, turning towards us, said impressively:—

"We are in Artá!"

Our destination in Artá was the Fonda de Rande, which had been warmly recommended by our friend the padre at Palma, but when the coach drew up in front of the Café Mangol we alighted, to find ourselves literally in the embrace of its voluble landlord. By pledging our word to hire a carriage from him on the morrow we obtained our release, and with Canet acting the dual part of guide and porter, we retraced our steps for a few yards along the dark, stony streets.

In speaking of the Fonda de Rande the padre had described the Señora Rande's cooking as being excellent, her charges moderate, and her house the cleanest in Artá. After two nights' experience we not only endorse his statements, but go further, and say that her house is the cleanest in all Majorca, and that is saying a very great deal.

Within half an hour a meal was before us—a dish of pickled fish, another of fresh fish, hot lamb cutlets and fried potatoes, sweet oranges, and plums of the señora's own drying.

Our rest that night was luxurious. The beds were soft, the blankets light and downy. We slept until the hour when

a man promenaded the town blowing blasts on a seashell to call the people to their work.

Before we had left our rooms ponderous steps resounded in the passage outside our doors. It was the proprietor of the diligence, brother to the host of the Café Mangol, come in person to ask at what time we would require a carriage for our visit to the caves.

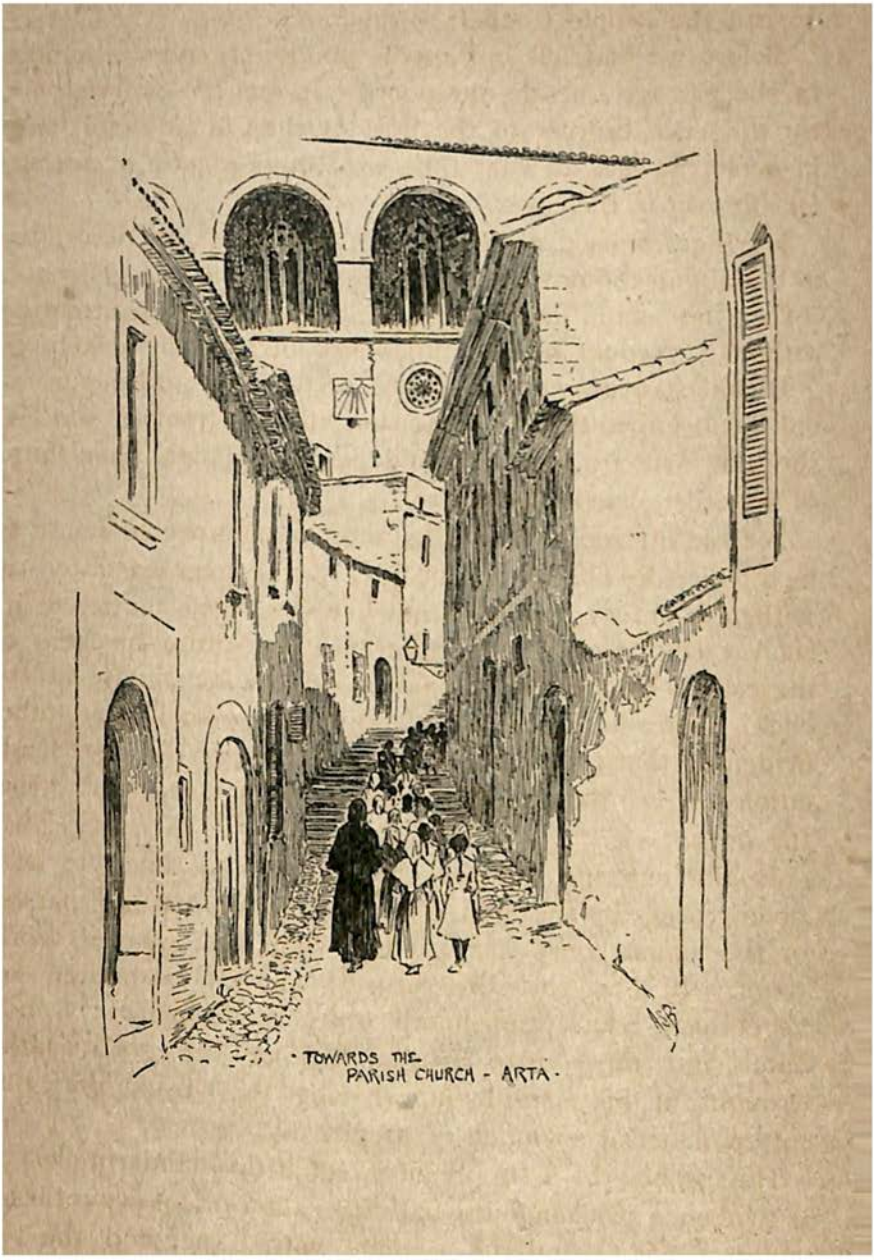
Having promised to be ready an hour later, we descended to the dining-room, where, after we had drunk our glasses of coffee, the señora insisted on refilling them: an attention without precedent in our experience of Spanish hostelries.

Breakfast over, we sallied out in quest of provisions for our little expedition, a somewhat difficult matter, for the shops at Artá are even more independent of signs than those of the other Balearic towns.

A little questioning revealed a quite unexpected house to be a baker's. The apartment next to the street was fitted up with a counter; but its window was closely shuttered, its shelves empty. To all appearance the entire business of the establishment was carried on in the bakehouse at the back, where, in full view of a pile of egg-shells and other evidences that proclaimed the genuineness of the ingredients employed, we bought little square sponge-cakes hot from the oven.

Boldly entering another shop, which we knew to be a greengrocer's by the orange-hued gourd and basin of parsley on the doorstep, we found it half shop, half weaver's work-room. In one part the mistress and her daughter sold vegetables, boots, and many other requirements of both outer and inner man. In the other the portly father wrought at his hand-loom, weaving the strong dark-blue cotton material so much in use locally.

Having bought a supply of sweet little mandarin oranges at twopence a dozen—just half the Palma price—we returned to the *fonda* to find the carriage, with Canet and the two horses that had made such light work of the diligence, waiting in readiness to take us to the caves.



TOWARDS THE
PARISH CHURCH - ARTA -

It had been so dark when we entered Artá that it was not until we left the town and looked back that we realized how picturesquely it was situated. The blue mountains form a wide circle round it, and in the centre of the clustered houses a hill crowned with church towers rises grandly.

Artá is a district of rural occupations. The fresh butter of the island is made at Son Servera, a village close by. On our way coastwards we met many interesting and paintable figures. Here an old man with a scarlet and yellow handkerchief tied under his hat, and a shaggy goatskin bag slung over his shoulder, herding a flock of kids; there a handsome girl, whose petticoat had faded to an adorable shade of crimson, and whose fingers were busy plaiting the strands of the palm-leaves as she watched by a cow that looked, as so many of the island cattle do, like an Alderney.

The fields on either side of the road were planted with flourishing trees of almond and olive and fig. Assuredly in their season no traveller need go hungry in any Majorcan road. He has only to help himself. They say that if a native sees a stranger taking his fruit, in place of upbraiding he will volunteer with sincere good-will to show him the tree the flavour of whose fruit is finest.

At a lonely bit of the way a contented-looking little group, consisting of a fine, stalwart lad in light-blue cotton, a smiling matron in workaday dress, and a plump black pig, stood at the corner of a field by the road to watch us go past.

As we neared them the radiance that illumined their faces found reflection in those of the Boy and Canet.

"It's the soldier who travelled in the diligence last night," the Boy explained. "That must be his home. He is one of the new recruits, and had six days' leave to spend with his mother. Don't they seem to be enjoying it?"

And they did. Even the black pig radiated supreme contentment.

High up on the left as we journeyed we saw a little ancient-looking town grouped about the lower slopes of an

eminence whose height seemed to be crowned by a castle surrounded by defences. It was Capdepera, a relic of antiquity of which we knew but little, and instantly resolved to learn more.

The way to the Dragon Caves had been across a bald moorland. That leading towards the Caves of Artá was down a fertile valley, that through the efforts of skilled husbandmen had been brought to a high state of cultivation. In a field by the wayside clumps of narcissus were blooming unappreciated, and as we came near the cliffs we saw that their rocky sides were yellow with a species of gorse which grew in cushioning clumps.

When we were within easy distance of a fine, sandy bay, flanked on the east by a towering cliff, a man left the solitary house which stood in the middle of the valley and came towards us.

"That is the guide," Canet said, pointing his whip-handle in his direction.

The guide to the Caves of Artá was a lean, middle-aged man, whose well-cut face suggested an innate appreciation of humour. When we stopped he mounted to the box, and we went on slowly, for the sandy road was heavy.

A little farther on we drew up again. A woman, supporting with both hands a tray containing something edible, had left the house and was hurrying towards us across the field. When she got near we saw that the tray contained three of the large pastry turnovers that, in outward appearance, at least, so strongly resemble Cornish pasties.

"I could do with one of these turnovers. I wonder if she sells them?" said the Boy, as she climbed to the box beside her husband and the genial Canet.

"A turnover wouldn't come amiss," agreed the Man. "I suppose she sells them."

But the woman did not offer her provender to us. The guide got one. I suspect Canet of getting another. The third was probably the cook's own dinner.

Leaving the carriage, we turned to the left of the lovely

bay, on whose sands rollers were breaking, and walked along the mile of delightful path that runs along the side of a precipitous pine-covered cliff. Beneath us roared the sea; from above came the murmur of wind-tossed pines, with whose perfume the air was fragrant, but the way was warm and sheltered.

Our guide, who accompanied us, kept modestly in the rear. It was only when we waited for him, and discovered that he was engaged lunching on one of the hot pasties, that we understood his reluctance to join us. To judge by eyesight, the pasty was stuffed with spinach and prunes. To judge by another sense it was stuffed with garlic.

We were naturally eager to compare the attractions of the Caves of Artá with their rivals of Manacor. A striking contrast was evident from the first sight. The approach to the Dragon Caves had offered no suggestion of the glories within. The exterior of the Caves of Artá, viewed when, turning away from the sun, one mounted the big flight of steps leading to the vast opening in the face of the cliff, was sublime.

When we had climbed the steps and were standing in the entrance-hall under the great overhanging roof, where maidenhair-fern grows green, the guide, kneeling on the ground before a lot of tin vessels, made a stock of acetylene gas to light our journey through the darkness. He had removed his hat, and as, with his mind intent on his work, he carefully mixed the ingredients, he suggested some magician preparing for some uncanny rite.

While he was occupied with his incantations we surveyed our surroundings, and for the first time were able to understand how the Moorish refugees, who at the capture of Palma fled in vast numbers to the caves, were able, for so protracted a period, to defy the army of the Conquistador that had followed them thither.

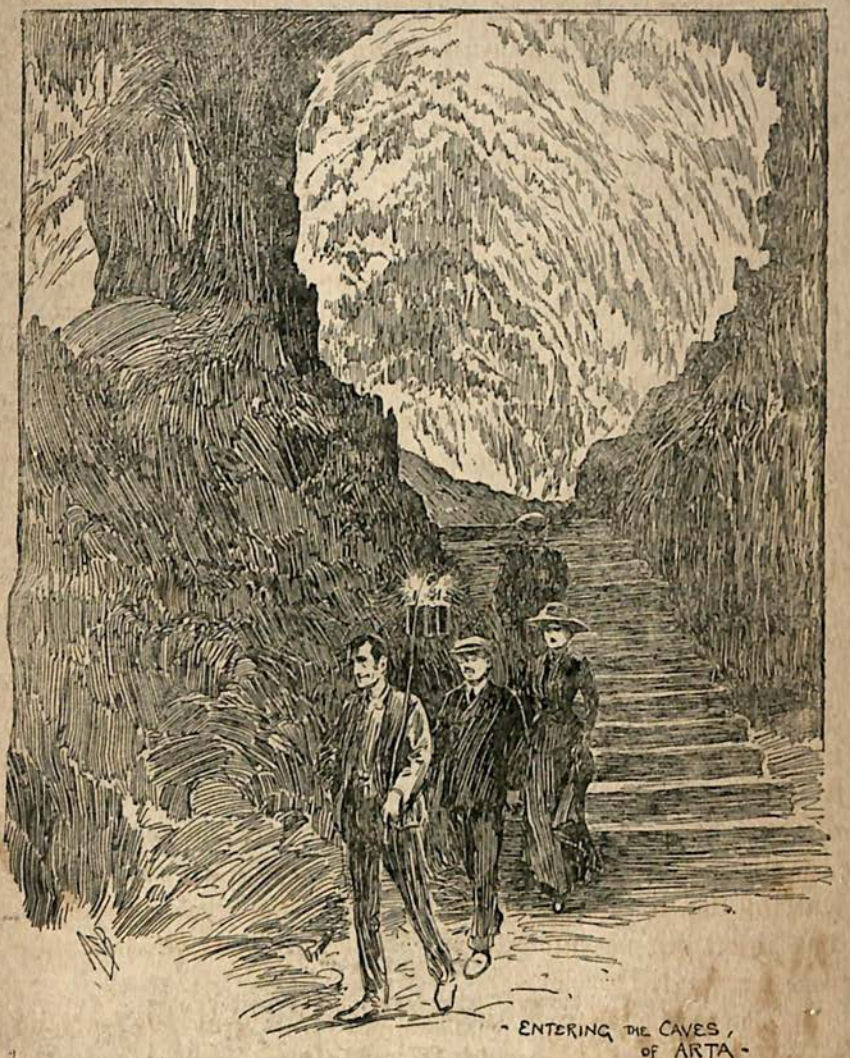
Beneath the wide opening the cliff falls precipitously to the sea. High above it the overhanging roof forms a protective hood.

The rocky sides and floor of the caves afforded an endless supply of the rough-and-ready missiles popular in those days. A more perfect natural stronghold could hardly be imagined. And but for a clever stratagem on the part of two brothers, members of that band of intrepid young nobles who so ardently supported their valiant leader, the Moors might have held out interminably. These two brothers scaled the cliff, and, having reached the point directly above the mouth of the cave, threw lighted firebrands down upon the huts and defences that were clustered on the rocky shelf beneath, with the object of setting the huts on fire and filling the caves with suffocating smoke. But the caves were so extensive that even this ruse did not quickly prevail. And it was not until Palm Sunday, 1230, three months after the taking of Palma, that the fugitives surrendered.

Shouldering an iron rod, from which were suspended two lamps, the guide announced that he was ready to start. There was no need to take off coats. The caves were so spacious and lofty that the temperature was pleasant, and although the distance to be traversed was considerable, the work of seeing them was not fatiguing.

The attitude of our present guide was different from that of the former. The guide who showed us the Dragon Caves trotted us through them in the business-like fashion of a man who is paid a fixed sum for performing a stated task. He wasted few words, and was, we thought, a trifle stingy in the matter of magnesium wire. The moment of his expansion came only after unexpected tips had been added to the amount of the regulation fees. But Amoras, guide to these Caves of Artá, showed them as though, after even thirty-five years of performance, he still joyed to reveal their glories. His interest also was a hereditary one; his father, who had held the post before him, had been killed by falling from the cliff path to the rocks beneath. Half-way between the bay and the caves, a cross set in the side of the cliff marks the place of the tragedy.

Amoras took the pace slowly, and after lighting us through



- ENTERING THE CAVES OF ARTA -

a succession of vast caverns, paused to remark, with a quiet smile of enjoyment at our surprise, "We are only now at the end of the entrance-hall."

The drought that prevailed without appeared to have had a malign influence even on the water supply of the Caves of Artá. Pointing to a hollow enclosed by stones, Amoras told us that was the well, which, for the first time in his thirty-five years of experience, he now saw dry.

Before we had traversed a tithe of the extent of these capacious caverns we understood how the fifteen hundred Moorish refugees, men, women, and children, with their flocks and herds, an immense quantity of grain, and many precious belongings, had found hiding-place within.

The Manacor Caves are fantastic and wonderful. Those of Artá are stupendous, overwhelming in their gloom and grandeur. Any conception I had ever formed of cavernous magnificence was far exceeded; and to me the Caves of Artá were infinitely more impressive than the Caves of Manacor. When I tried to express this, Amoras said devoutly:—

"The Cave of the Dragon is an oratory chapel. This is a cathedral."

Countless glories are concealed in the vast caverns. Stalactites so large that to try to calculate the length of time occupied in their formation makes the brain reel. Statues as complete in detail as though carven by the chisel of a sculptor. Cascades of glistening crystal. The huge crouching figure of a winged Mephistopheles, and in the Hall of the Banners flags—marvels of immobile drapery—that stood out at right angles from the pillar whence they were suspended.

It was in the Hall of the Banners that Amoras, warning us not to follow, disappeared from sight, leaving us in the dark. Then from a height came strange noises designed to strike terror into the breasts of the timid. Then the light of a Roman candle threw into weird effect the great maze of stalactite pillars, cones, and festoons that rose about and above us to unimagined heights.

But perhaps the most beautiful if not the most amazing of the sights was that contained in the Salon of the Queen of the Columns, where, in a lofty hall, there stood alone, as though conscious of its exquisite beauty and holding aloof, a stately pillar twenty-two metros—over sixty feet—in height. About the base were grouped curiously modelled clusters of flowers, and above, as far as the eye could distinguish, the same delicate tracing was revealed.

"Under it we are as nothing," Amoras had said reverently, as he stood beneath it, and one felt that had he worn a hat he would have uncovered before the column.

There was a delightfully nerve-soothing effect in the absolute stillness of the caves. Not a sound from the outer world could penetrate these vast recesses.

"All the neighbours are asleep," Amoras replied drily when the Man remarked on the silence.

Though the Caves of Artá are astonishing in their immensity, there is nothing alarming or gruesome about them. It did not occur to anybody to speculate secretly on what would happen if the guide were seized with illness or anything happened to the lights.

Both sets of caves—the Dragon and the Artá—are well worthy a special expedition. If it were possible to see only one I would give the preference to the Caves of Artá. But that is a matter of mere personal taste. I must confess that men seem more impressed by the fantastic marvels concealed in the Dragon Caves.

I had promised to show Señora Rande the English way of serving spinach as a vegetable course. So when we reached the *fonda*, only a quarter of an hour late for lunch, the señora was waiting to hold me to my word.

Fortunately the cooking of spinach is the simplest of culinary devices, and while the fresh green leaves were sinking to a pulp in the earthen pipkin, I had the privilege of watching the señora make one of her excellent omelets—an invaluable lesson, and one that I humbly trust will render impossible my again making such an egregious failure as I

did when attempting to cook an omelet at the Hospederia at Miramar.

Being certain of a good driver and good horses, we had engaged Canet to return for us at three o'clock. We were anxious to get a near view of the quaint old town, Capdepera, whose distant appearance had attracted us as we drove to the caves in the morning. And we wished also to visit Cala Retjada, a little fishing village a mile or two farther away, that we had heard was celebrated for its known fish and for its suspected smugglers.

The short drive was full of the life and interest that characterize an agricultural district. About the stone dikes, sloe blossom lay in drifts, looking strangely home-like beside the giant clumps of cactus.

Leaving the carriage when we had reached Capdepera, we walked about briskly, for the wind was fresh, bent on exploration. A peep into the church revealed nothing of special note. Turning away, we climbed a steep street, and found ourselves outside the old gateway leading to the fortified enclosure that in bygone days had evidently been the place of refuge for the citizens when danger threatened. And of a truth the space enclosed within these battlemented walls would have afforded shelter to a great community.

To the well-preserved ramparts Nature had added an impregnable defence in the form of a thick growth of cactus. Both without and within the wall their prickly leaves luxuriated.

From the flat roofs of the watch-towers that surmounted the battlements the watchers must have been able to see to a surprising distance. A white line across the sea revealed the coast of Minorca, twenty miles away. Close by was Cabo de Pera, the eastmost point of the island. With a vigilant guard stationed in these watch-towers no enemy, either from land or sea, could have reached Capdepera before the inhabitants had timely warning to remove themselves and their valuables within the safety of the stronghold.

The old parish church—Our Lady of the Hope—is within

the enclosure, close by a modern house that bore signs of occupation. In pockets of hungry soil a little spindly grain grew about the roots of hoary fig-trees. While all the fig-trees outside were still naked, one in a sheltered corner already showed bursting leaves and the diminutive knubbly warts that were to swell into fruit. Besides tufts of wild mignonette, henbane reared its downy foliage and evil-smelling creamy blossom.

Seated in the open doorways of the houses, the women of this remote town were making baskets from the dried leaves of the palmetto (garbayous), a dwarf palm-tree that abounds on the mountains of Artá. Some were pleating the split fronds into long strips that others were sewing into the baskets, which besides being largely used in Majorca are exported by ship-loads to France.

The pleasant and cleanly little industry seemed the ruling influence of the town. In the street we passed men carrying great numbers of the baskets fitted snugly inside one another. A glimpse into the open door of a warehouse revealed the place close packed from floor to rafters with the baskets. On the way to Cala Retjada we drove past a cart piled high with stock ready for shipment; and in a sheltered cove beyond the fishing village we saw, lying at anchor, the *pailebot* that was waiting to convey the goods to an over-seas market.

When we reached Cala Retjada the wind was blowing in fresh from the sea, and the boats lay snugly drawn up on the beach of a tiny haven. A number of small shut-up houses lining the semicircle of the bay showed that the stone-washed shore was a favourite place of summer residence. To the west is the imposing headland of Cape Vermay. Westwards pine woods clothe the rocky slopes about the sea. Truly a pleasant place to fly to when the interior of the island is hot and relaxing.

The people of the eastern town struck us as being more Moorish in type than those of the more northern or western parts of Majorca. In Cala Retjada, in the person of the

handsome bronzed captain of the *pailebot*, we saw and instantly recognized our ideal of a pirate chief—the heroic pirate who treats his enemies nobly. He wore a scarlet night-cap with a grass-green band, a golden brown velvet suit, an orange cummerbund, and yellow string-soled shoes. Truly he was a joy to behold.

Daylight was fading when we turned our faces towards Artá; and as we approached the romantically situated town, we passed many parties of returning labourers, and many little bands of pretty girls, who had presumably strolled out to meet them, though each sex kept rigorously apart.

It is the rarest thing to see an unmarried man and a girl walking alone in Majorca. The strict system of chaperonage that prevails in the higher classes evidently has its prototype in the lower also, for the maidens walked with twined arms—like some Maeterlinck chorus—and the men, as far as we could judge, confined their attentions to admiring glances.

We had heard that the remains of a Phœnician village still existed in an ancient forest of ilex not far from Artá. When we questioned the señora next morning, as she poured out the coffee, regarding its whereabouts, she promptly suggested that her husband would take us there. So when we sallied forth it was in company with Señor Rande and the *perro de Rande*—a fine specimen of the ancient hunting dogs that are still prevalent in the island. It amused us to see him leap high into the air to sight his prey.

The way, though it covered a bare half mile, was devious, and without assistance would have been difficult to find. But it ended in something far more wonderful than we had been led to anticipate.

Near the summit of a gentle mound that was covered with ilex and low-growing scrub we found ourselves confronted by a wall built of vast, roughly hewn blocks of stone. Before us was an open portal, formed of two huge blocks supporting a third stone, one end of which was

pierced by an orifice that had two openings towards the sky.

Within this gateway were the tumbled remains of a city that had been encircled by walls constructed of great single blocks of stone—a city so old that all tradition of its builders was lost. We had thought the Roman remains at Alcudia and Pollensa as of surpassing antiquity. Here was evidence of an occupation far older still.

An eminence in the centre of the enclosure revealed the site of the inevitable, and at that date indispensable, watch-tower. From its top, though now lowered by the passing of centuries and overgrown with herbage, we saw through the gaps in the trees beyond how comprehensive a view the watchers had commanded of the surrounding country.

The top of the mound on which we stood had been hollowed out, and Señor Rande remarked that children came up from Artá to dig for treasures.

"Do they find any?" we asked innocently.

Raising his forefinger, the señor shook it before his face in the gesture we had grown to think characteristically Majorcan.

"*Nada!*" he made laconic reply.

Devil's tomatoes, heavy with golden fruit, and beautiful large-blossomed lavender periwinkle grew in great profusion about the devastated homes of the vanished people. And it seemed a curious coincidence to remember that the last periwinkles I had seen were those growing about the base of the megalithic monuments in Minorca. One wonders what connection this starry-eyed flower could have had with these prehistoric races.

I had received the information that begonias grew wild in Majorca, with the mental reservation natural to a native of a less gracious climate. So it was a pleasant surprise to recognize a leaf or two of their distinctive marled foliage thrust out from between the heaped stones of the ruined Phœnician village.

Our return journey from Artá was not worthy to rank in

our memories with our triumphal progress thither. We had a special conveyance, but as Canet was already in Manacor, having driven the diligence that left Artá at three o'clock that morning, he could not act as our charioteer, and his employer, who drove us, set the pace sedately.

The wind was high, dust was more than a possibility, and the box seat held no attractions. So we sat inside and yawned a little as the kilometros crept slowly past.

In the little grass-grown station at Manacor the afternoon crowd was beginning to gather. And in the station yard the diligences for Artá, for Capdepera, for San Lorenzo, were drawn up prepared to start as soon as the train had arrived and their passengers had climbed into their seats.

We had taken our places in one of the empty carriages that were standing ready to be attached to the train for Palma, when the smiling sun-tanned face of Canet appeared at the window. He had come to bid us good-speed, and remained to share our tea, and to puzzle over the powers of the Thermos bottle. Though he politely praised the tea, I am convinced that he secretly scorned the bad taste of the "Ingleses" who chose to drink so uninteresting a decoction in a land overflowing with good red wine.

Our little excursion, undertaken though it had been with something of reluctance, had proved like others a charming one, and one whose every moment had been full of new interests.

·PALM-SUNDAY AT SÓLLER·

XXI

AMONG THE HILLS

MARCH was more than half over; we had already reluctantly begun to measure our stay in the Fortunate Isles by weeks instead of months when we drove to Sóller to spend a few days with an English friend, who, with all the world to choose from, elects to make her home at Sóller.

When we left Sóller on our previous visit in early December, darkness had fallen long before we reached Palma, so the first half of this return journey was new to us.

And as the day was beautiful, we sat luxuriously back in the open carriage and enjoyed it to the full. The shower that had fallen had greatly refreshed the land, and though more rain was eagerly hoped for, the almond-trees were heavy in leafage and thickly ruched with the green-velvet casings of the embryonic fruit.

During the winter we had noticed few wild birds. Now amongst the olive-trees that lined the highway as we approached the rising ground, many were flying. A brightly plumaged bird with a crested head crossed our path like a flash of gold, and disappeared among the trees. It was the hoo-poo, the typical Balearic bird, known locally as the *pu-put*.

The highway between Palma and Valldemosa passes through a picturesque gulch. The road between Palma and Sóller climbs a considerable mountain, up whose steep side the native makers of roads—surely the most ingenious in the world—have carried the path in a series of amazing zigzags so that the view of the traveller varies incessantly. As we mounted higher and massive crags rose about us, we sometimes stopped the carriage to look down over the vast orchard that covers the plain, to where the far distant spire of Palma Cathedral showed against the sea.

As our altitude increased the air became colder. The wind that met us at the top was almost keen, and we were glad to rattle down the farther side of the hill up which we had climbed so slowly.

A few turns down the zigzag, a fine old cross, its carving gnawed by the corroding tooth of time, stands overlooking the valley and the tawny-roofed houses of Sóller, as they lie surrounded by their orange gardens. A poor cottage was hard by, and while we paused to let the Man make a rapid sketch, two children, a boy and girl, crept nearer and nearer until at last they grouped themselves in conventional attitude at the foot of the cross. It did not require words to tell us that they must have posed in the foreground of many photographs of the same subject.

At the Hotel Marina, where our friend was staying, three good things awaited us—a gracious welcome, a glorious fire of almond shells, and a daintily spread tea-table.

In the evening we went to Son Angelats, a beautiful "possession" dating back to the Moorish occupation. Son Angelats nestles snugly into the side of the mountain, and all the year round it is bowered in roses of every shade and hue. The air was fragrant with the mingled odours of flowers innumerable; and when we walked down to Sóller through the gloaming the sweet essence of the blossoms accompanied us, for our hands were full of roses and violets.

As we strolled through the grounds I noticed what I thought was a blue bead lying on the path. Picking it up, I discovered it to be the seed of a small grassy-leaved plant new to me, but much used in Majorca for covering the sides of banks where grass refuses to grow. The seed, which was about the size of a pea, was of the pure deep blue of the sapphire.

The name of the plant the gardener declared to be *convoladia*. I spell the word phonetically. And when I asked what the appearance of the flower was, he made the incredible statement—and stuck to it—that the plant had none.

It is impossible to stay in Sóller without feeling the magnetic attraction of the Puig Mayor, which is higher than any mountain in the British Isles. A dozen times in an hour we found ourselves turning to see how it looked, for its aspect held the charm of exhaustless variety. One might leave it a purple shadow amid light-hued satellite hills and turn again a few minutes later to discover it rose-tipped and the others in shadow.

Next morning I looked out on a lovely scene. In the growing light of dawn the encompassing mountains showed clearly their outlines, unblurred save by a wanton wisp of mist that seemed too trivial to bear any meaning. But when my breakfast tray was brought in, rain was falling with the

quiet persistence of rain that has come to stay. So we spent the morning indoors enjoying refreshing gossip, and refreshing peeps into English books, and in watching from the windows and balconies the ever-changing cloud effects on the mountains.

There were moments when the crest of the Puig Mayor rose majestic above a rolling fleece of vapour that blotted out all the lesser heights; and times when, though the clouds hung heavy over the town, and the few passers-by huddled beneath time-worn umbrellas, every red rock and cleft of the mountain glowed under a sun that shone for it alone. Or again the Puig Mayor itself might vanish, and some nearer height stand out against the wall of mist in unexpected beauty of contour—imposing only because of its temporary isolation.

In the afternoon the sky cleared a little and we ventured out. The Good Fairy, our hostess, who abounds in individualities that are as charming as they are original, possessed, by right of purchase, the fruit of a tree of sweet oranges. Her tree grew in an orchard on the outskirts of the town that is itself an orange garden. And hither we went to listen to the sweet clamour of the nightingales while eating the fruit we had plucked.

Among the glossy-green leaves Keats's "light-wingéd Dryads of the trees" were singing "of summer in full-throated ease." We would gladly have lingered long, but heavy rain again encompassed us; and we returned to the comforts of the hotel, reluctant to leave the melodious plot, but rejoicing for the sake of the islanders, in whose expectant ears the sound of the rain falling on their thirsty land must have been much more musical than the song of the immortal bird.

Next day was Palm Sunday—the children's day. Yet when we left the hotel in the morning and ventured out into the rain-washed streets, there was not a child in sight. Old people—grandmothers, formless figures muffled from forehead to ankle in black shawls, moved decorously along carrying

folding stools; grandfathers, protecting their Sabbath garb with rose-coloured umbrellas of a silk so fine and antique that one longed to implore them not to ruin it by exposure to the weather, were hastening towards the church. But the narrow streets of the quaint old town were curiously empty of children.

To our uncomprehending eyes it appeared more the day of the grandparents than of the children. I blush now to acknowledge that, for the moment, we had forgotten that the day of the children is always, and in almost greater measure, the day of the grandparents also.

We entered the church to find both the outer absence of youth and the presence of the aged explained. Above even the pungent odour of incense, the savour of sweet flowers perfumed the air. The centre of the church was a seething mass of greenery. Tall spikes of palm arose like sword blades from out a forest of green branches—a forest that looked as though ruffled by a strong wind, so restless was its incessant motion.

Closer observance revealed the motive power to be a multitude of small boys who sat, closely packed together, on benches, holding aloft branches, many of which were wreathed with flowers. Most of the trophies showed the grey-green of olive—a shapely bough chosen with care from the family possession, with all the available blossoms of the garden twined about the stem. And many revealed ingenuity and artistic taste in the garlanding of the flowers. Certain of the palm fronds had a piece fixed athwart the tip to represent a cross. A proportion, happily but a small proportion, of the trophies carried struck the blatant note of artificiality, for in their case the palm frond was split and twisted into ornamental shapes, and out of all semblance of that they were supposed to represent. A few were travesties of Christmas-trees, for their fictitious branches were laden with silvered and gilt sweets, toys and trinkets, seemingly trivial, but doubtless owning a significance of their own.

Beside the rows of close-cropped dark heads moved priests

and black-robed teachers. And on the outskirts of the throng hovered bigger boys, torn betwixt two opinions—whether it were better to continue to assert their claim to have reached an age exempt from such childish matters, or to yield to their natural desire to join the palm-bearers and have a place in the procession that was to follow.

One urchin, but recently advanced to the dignity of his first long trousers, held half-concealed a scrap of olive, to which he added by furtive gleanings from the fallen blossoms that littered the floor, garnering a battered, but still recognizable rose here, a gaudy marigold there, until he had achieved a trophy that, if not one to court careful examination, yet at a little distance presented quite a respectable appearance.

When the rose-red umbrellas had dripped themselves almost dry, and the branches supported by the hot hands of restless boys were waving faster than ever, the black-robed teachers and a nun, moving noiselessly amongst their pupils, began to marshal them into a double line.

Standing at the side, in company with grandfathers whose fine old weather-beaten faces gazed proudly intent at those who were to carry their names to succeeding generations, we watched as the little forest of branches, borne sedately, passed in front of the altar, and then moved in procession round the church. The smallest boys walked in front, and many of them were burdened with the care of umbrellas in addition to the proud glory of the decorated branch that wobbled in their tired hands; while boys of larger growth, unable to resist, yielded to a natural desire to shoulder their boughs as muskets.

Very few girls took an active part in the proceedings. The half-dozen who did belonged to the class that have hats for Sunday wear, and the palms they carried had cost money. Little girls whom fortune had denied the envied possession of either ugly hats or ornamental palms looked on with longing in their soft dark eyes as the favoured ones marched by.

When the complete circuit of the edifice had been made the palm-bearers moved to a side, and a band of clergy advancing paused just within the great doors, through which certain of their number had slipped outside.

Standing thus, their resplendent robes of purple and scarlet thrown into strong relief against the old wood of the door, the group began chanting. When they ceased there came from without the sound of answering voices. Again were the voices within raised in recitative. From outside came again the reply.

Then, reverberating solemnly through the deep silence that ensued, came the sound of a thrice repeated knock on the closed door. At the summons the wide doors were thrown open and the outside band admitted. Then, the symbol of the release of repentant souls from purgatory having been thus impressively enacted, the band, now chanting in unison, moved towards the high altar.

The ceremony of the blessing of the palms is a beautiful one, and one of which no child who has taken part can ever forget the meaning.

The last we saw of it was a hale old grandfather, who carried in his arms, under the shelter of his big rose-hued umbrella, a sleepy little boy, whose weary hand still grasped his flower-wreathed olive-branch as they took the path leading to the mountains.

The earnestly prayed for rain, when it did come, came in unstinted quantity. It had rained all night, and on Monday rain was still falling, but more softly—almost, one might say, reluctantly—on the little white-robed first communicants who, sheltered by the umbrellas of mothers or aunts, were threading their way delicately among the pools of water that lay as traps for their white-shod feet.

But the Majorcan climate is too beneficent to spoil the notable day for the young communicants. Before noon the clouds had drifted away from the mountains; and though the sun did not appear, the air was mild and balmy, and through the wonderfully absorbent nature of the Sóller soil

the streets speedily became dry enough to enable the dainty white shoes to trip about almost without blemish.

And all day long, everywhere one looked, young girls, some in expensive raiment, others in evidently home-made garments, but all with long white veils flowing from their wreathed heads, moved sedately from house to house, accompanied by an admiring train of female relatives, as they paid visits of ceremony to all their friends.

And as for the boys!—words fail to tell of the glories of their harshly new suits, their shining patent leather boots, of their spreading collars, of the elaborate bow of gold embroidered white ribbon that decorated their left arms; or, greatest of all—of their self-importance.

They, too, had their public promenade, and paid their visits. They, too, had their attendant group of appreciative relatives. On meeting any friends the little party would pause, and the graceful ceremony of asking forgiveness for past misdeeds be gone through, when the young communicant, bending and kissing the hand of the elder, would say, "If I have ever done you any harm, forgive me now."

My men had gone off to see Biniaraix, a hamlet of brown houses grouped about the white tower of a chureh on the mountain-side, and to enjoy a reminiscent glance at Fornalutx, the quaint hill-town where, on our previous visit to Sóller, we had spent a well remembered afternoon.

So the Good Fairy and I, left to our own devices, passed the afternoon in rambling about this town of amazing contrasts. As I said before, Sóller is endowed with a curiously absorbent soil—a soil that acts as a charm in cases of inflammatory rheumatism and is prime factor in the remarkable longevity of the inhabitants. The roads were already so dry and pleasant to walk on that, but for the evidence of the *torrente*, which was a raging river, it would have been hard to credit that for two days and nights thrice-blessed rain had fallen without intermission. Snow covered the crest of the Puig Mayor and lay heavy on its shoulders, yet down in the valley the soft air was sweet with

the fragrance of orange blossoms, and all about the golden or copper-coloured fruit hung in profusion on the trees. Truly Sóller is a place of piquant contrasts.

The trespasser is welcomed in Majorca. There are no notice-boards—except a few *vedados* to warn against hunting—no padlocked gates. So we wandered about, following by-paths that led from one small "possession" to another; and never, after we left it, returning to the highroad until it was time to return home.

That the Good Fairy is widely beloved was evident at every turn. Her diplomatic powers are great, but she had to exercise them all to avoid spending the afternoon indoors in the hospitable homes of her humble acquaintances, who, catching a glimpse of her as she passed, hastened out to entreat her to enter.

Living in this place of natural delight must be cheaper even than in Palma. One courteous dame took us all over her house, that we might see the views from her windows. The house, which was in the town, was a comparatively new dwelling in a good airy street. It had a large high-ceilinged *zaguan*—the entrance chamber that is a combination of hall and reception-room—from which opened a neat kitchen. A few steps up from the *zaguan* was a cosy parlour from which a stair led down to the *terras*. Above, on the first floor, were two bedrooms, and on the second floor two more, all well lit and affording exquisite views. Being in town the house had no garden; but the *terras* with its big jars of plants seemed a favourite place for taking the air.

When I indulged my curiosity by asking the rent, the good dame told us that for all this excellence she paid twenty-four dollars a year—less than five pounds; and the rent included taxes!

As we strolled farther afield the wealth of the land was heaped upon us. Our hands overflowed with the Balearic violets, that are the sweetest in the world, and the Balearic pansies, that are, I verily believe, the poorest. For pansies love a cold damp soil, and rarely flourish south of the River

Tweed ; and the Tweed is a far, far cry from these sun-loved isles.

We had sprays of orange blossom given us too, and ripe oranges, whose golden sides the beneficent sun had tanned to copper. And we sat in a garden and ate them, while the aged donor, who still possessed the fine features and limpid eyes of her bygone youth, talked to us, illustrating her stories by a pantomime of feature and gesture so expressive that even I, with my meagre knowledge of her language, could hardly fail to grasp their meaning.

In the kitchen of her house the wide hearth was almost shut in by a three-sided settle, whose seats were strewn with fleecy white sheepskins. On the kitchen shelves the native ware of brown, decorated in crude patterns of red and yellow, was arranged with unconscious artistic effect.

Mounting gradually higher, we rested at a point where the town lay open before us. Hills rose steeply behind us ; in front the ground sloped down in terraces ; and, far beyond, the fruitful gardens and russet houses of the town rose again towards the snow-crested mountains, or at one point fell gradually to the cleft beyond which showed the sea.

Becoming suddenly conscious that we had let the tea hour slip past unheeded, we were hastening back to the hotel, when, crossing the bridge that spans the *torrente*, we caught the promise of a sight that made us quickly return to the open space of the market square that we might obtain a less interrupted view. Over the roofs of the houses the snow-capped mountain summits, struck by some magic shaft from the hidden sun, glowed rose-red, and the unearthly beauty of the transfiguration held us mute and spell-bound.

The curious thing was, that though little groups of people stood gossiping in the market-place no one appeared to have eyes for this refulgence but ourselves. Seeing us standing gazing silently towards the mountains, they turned also to see what had attracted our attention, then turned away uncomprehending.

XXII

DEYÁ, AND A PALMA PROCESSION

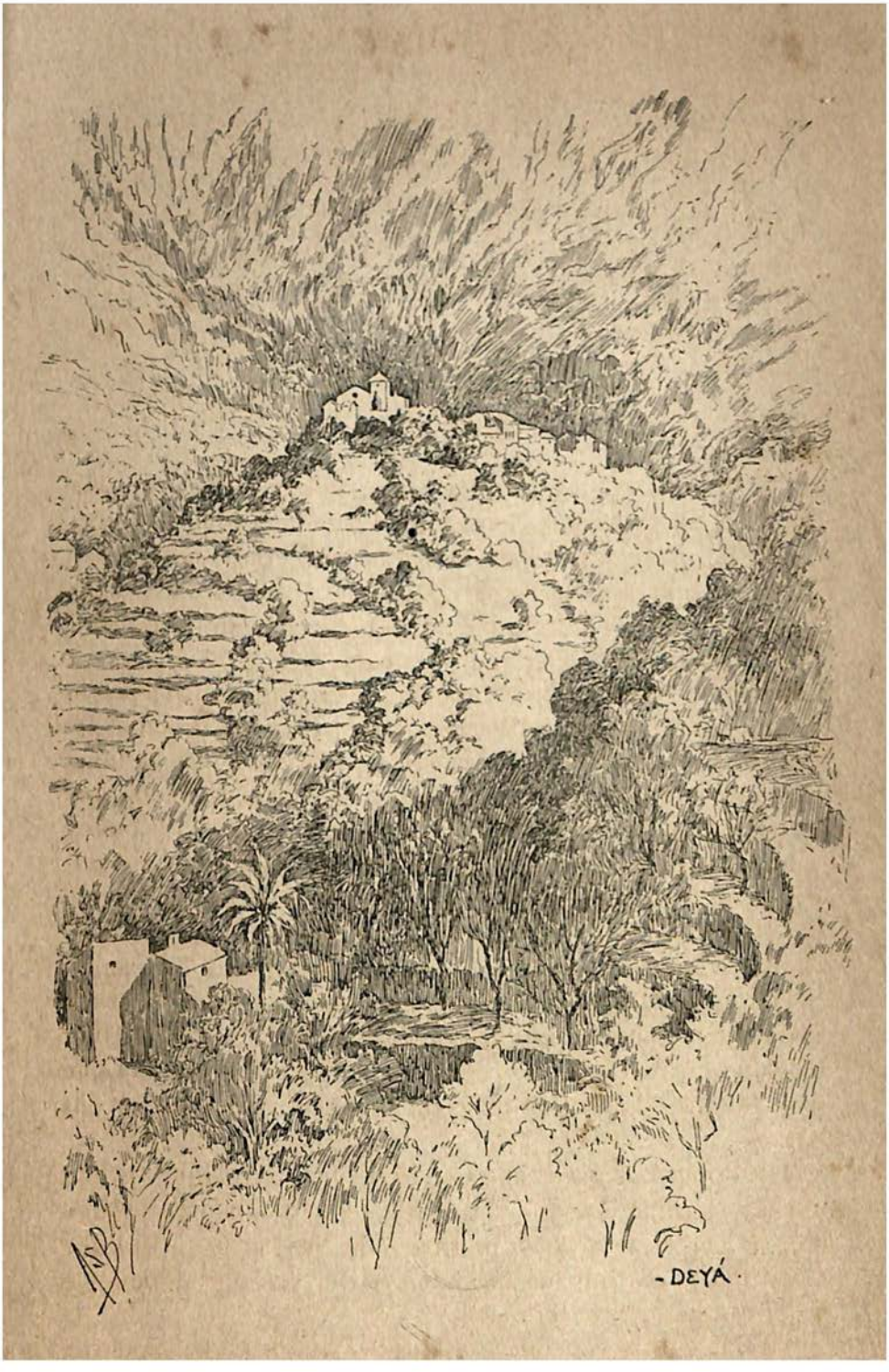
THE last lingering trails of rain-clouds had vanished and the sun shone from a cloudless blue sky when next day we drove off behind Pepe and his pair of white horses to picnic at Deyá, the curiously distinctive little town that perches on a hill betwixt mountain and sea, half-way between Sóller and Miramar.

The road was a good one, and as the way, though steep, was set in zigzag fashion, its ascent would have been easy but for the barbarous way in which, acting with the empty cunning of these would-be crafty island road-menders, someone had littered the road with lumps of stone, thus forcing the passing vehicle to act the ignominious part of road-roller by threading its way out and in over the newly mended parts. Sometimes the stones were so evilly placed as to impel us to venture perilously near the edge of the precipitous track.

It was a relief as we slowly mounted upwards to come upon the perpetrator of the crime in the very act of further blocking our path. Taken thus red-handed, he was not one whit dismayed, but complacently stepped aside to let us pass.

The opportunity was not one to be missed. Half drawing up and turning round on the box, Pepe launched towards him a few objurgations in trenchant Majorcan. And the Good Fairy, putting her head out of the carriage, added the weight of her gentle reproach.

"What is this you do?" she asked in her pretty Spanish.


- DEYÁ -

"Placing stones on the road to welcome the strangers! Is this the way you show them the delicacy of the Spaniard?"

Thus doubly reproached, the *caminero* stood transfixed; and our emotions having found vent, we drove on, leaving him with his hand raised to his brass-bound hat, his mouth open but speechless.

Having reached the summit, we began the descent, losing sight of our grand mountains, but gaining a glimpse of the Mediterranean, which glowed in that warm blue that makes one wonder—until one tries the temperature—why sea-bathing should be confined to the summer months.

The tawny-roofed houses of Deyá cluster on a high rock that rises like an island from out a sea of valley which is girdled by precipitous mountains. Streams in cascades were rushing down in a joyful pell-mell, the cherry-trees were heavy with blossom, and the pomegranates were opening their first delicate copper-tinted leaves as we drove along the highroad that follows the curve of the valley.

The attentive *chef* of the Marina had made us independent of *fondas*, and Pepe had promised to find us a good place to lunch in. So when he drew up at a path that branched off from the highway on the Miramar side of Deyá, we took our hamper, from which the neck of a bottle protruded alluringly, and started to explore it.

The path ended at a gate that opened into private grounds. In any other country the most presumptuous among us would have hesitated before invading the garden of unknown owners. But we were in the Fortunate Isles and the charm of their unconventionality influenced us. Walking in, we found some conveniently placed stone seats under the shade of a huge lemon-tree, and there we spread our feast of lamb cutlets, potato omelets, cakes and fruit.

The house, of one corner of whose quaintly terraced garden we had taken possession, appeared to be untenanted. Its windows were closely shuttered, its stable empty; but soon from the highest terrace an old head peeped at us. A little later it appeared on a terrace lower, then nearer

still, the attached body becoming gradually more and more visible, until the owner appeared before us in the person of an aged woman whose frivolously abbreviated petticoats seemed incompatible with her sober face.

It was the caretaker, come not to warn us that we were intruding, but to urge us to leave the place we had chosen for one where there was a proper table and much water.

We resisted her enticements and she trotted off, her appearance a ludicrous combination of propriety and indecorum, with her serious face swathed in its black kerchief and her lavishly displayed light drab ankles.

She did not quite abandon us, however; and when the men had gone off to paint she returned, and was so evidently desirous that we would not leave before seeing the marvels of the garden, that we consented to allow her to show them.

And, indeed, the arrangement of the grounds revealed much ingenuity. The spot where she would have had us eat was a stone-built *mirador*, through a shallow cave, at whose back a mountain torrent had been induced to flow. As she had promised, there was both "a table" and "much water." In summer the suggestion of coolness imparted by even a trickle of water would be charming. Then, with the torrent rushing at breakneck speed, the effect was a little overpowering and the noise positively deafening. Our chosen place under the big lemon-tree might not be so extraordinary, but it had a placid charm that soothed while it did not detract from the matter in hand.

The nephew of our unconsciously serio-comic cicerone, in the person of a one-eyed *calender*—I beg his pardon, gardener—joined us to reveal fresh attractions of summer-house and rivulets, and of a grotto where, amid a perfect cascade of maidenhair-fern, a graceful statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was embowered. From every point the view was lovely, but I defy anybody to find a spot about Deyá that does not afford a lovely prospect.

When we left the place our lady of the stockings, eager to do something for the generous tip the Good Fairy had

slipped into her hand, insisted on carrying our hamper. And during the remainder of our afternoon at Deyá, whether we went up hill or down dale, amongst the picturesque houses clustered on the church-crowned hill or through the gardens that lined the side of the river, we seemed always to be encountering her. Whether she was paying a round of visits to display her coin, or bound on an exhaustive shopping expedition to squander it, we did not know; but at every turn of the road we seemed to see the twinkle of those drab ankles.

One of the many charms of Deyá is the proximity of the sea, which laves the foot of its valley. Another is its delicious irregularity. I do not believe there are a half-dozen yards of straight road in Deyá. Every house has its own elevation, its individual bypaths. Another and an invaluable charm to artists is the manageable quality of its pictorial effects. The extensive grandeur of Miramar is almost unpaintable, but Deyá has a complete picture at every turn. We saw many in the course of that afternoon stroll. Women washing, men gathering oranges, a handsome woman in a petticoat of vivid scarlet leading a recalcitrant black goat: all ready for transference to canvas.

The hours flew past. Almost before we knew, dusk was falling and we were on our way back to where the snow-capped Puig Mayor presides over the wonderful Sóller valley.

We had been a little apprehensive, expecting a repetition of the somewhat hazardous morning journey. But the Good Fairy's appeal to the chivalry of the Spaniard had borne immediate result. Every stone had been laboriously removed from the path. So without hindrance we rattled gaily down into the valley, where lights were already twinkling through the dusk.

The final day of our visit to Sóller brought yet another experience of unusual interest. Our hostess had still another surprise in store for us. We had viewed the high mountains from beneath, now we were going to see them from the crest of one of their number.

Pepe took the reins in his skilled hands and guided the surefooted mules, who, for this expedition, replaced the white horses, up a perilous road that curved about the mountain-side, rising higher and ever higher until we looked down over the many terraces of olives into the valley that lay placidly basking in the afternoon sunshine.

Our ascent was necessarily very deliberate. As we wound slowly up we passed neither dwelling nor human being; and those of us to whom the way was new began to wonder why any road should have existed on so lonely a height. Then when we had got so high that it seemed as though an eaglet's aerie would be the most likely habitation, the road ended on a flat plateau, and we found ourselves driving into the outer courtyard of a farm-house so old and weather-beaten that in appearance it resembled the rocks and crags that surrounded it.

We alighted unnoticed. Doves were flying overhead. A dog greeted our advent with an interrogative growl; fowls clucked about unheeding. Pepe, rolling himself up in a striped blanket, curled up on the box to await the hour when it might be our pleasure to return. And we walked on, wondering if we had left the everyday world behind in the valley and had all unwittingly climbed to the palace of the sleeping beauty.

A stone-cast from the house was a *mirador* known to our conductress. Securely seated therein, poised right on the edge of the mountain-crest, we looked at the vast panorama. Crags rose high about us. Behind and above us towered an unfamiliar side of the Puig Mayor, its massive shoulders deep in drifted snow.

Far beneath, looking like some gaily coloured map when seen from that height, lay the port of Sóller with its lake-like harbour and pigmy headlands. And northwards spread the far-reaching sea, whose grandeur no altitude could dwarf.

The sensation of being above the world was gloriously exhilarating. When a bird flew overhead we almost felt as

though we too had wings, and two lines from Davidson's *Ballad of a Nun* kept running through my mind:

> "I am sister to the mountains now,
> And sister to the sun and moon."

Leaving the *mirador*, we wandered happily about the plateau. Among the grass a strange flower was blooming, and it seemed quite natural that this amazing location should boast a flower of its own. It was an orchid whose sugarloaf-shaped spike was covered with florets of dull purple, close-packed after the manner of a grape hyacinth. In many of the plants the flowers burst into a tuft at the top. It was strange and not pretty, but curiously in keeping with its isolated situation.

When we returned to the house Pepe, swathed in his blanket, was still deep in the slumber of the man of tranquil mind: but the mistress of the house was at hand. Approaching, she greeted us with grave courtesy. She had the remains of much beauty. The soft bloom of girlhood lingered on her matronly cheeks, and the retrospective look of one accustomed to deep solitude was in her fine dark eyes.

On her invitation we entered the house, whose tall sides surrounded an inner courtyard. One end of the big cool kitchen was partitioned off with high-backed settles, and right on the middle of the floor of the "cosy corner" thus formed a pile of logs was glowing. Looking up, we saw that overhead the roof contracted until it became a wide chimney, through which a glimpse of blue sky was visible. A gun hung on the whitewashed wall, and on one of the seats which was thickly spread with skins a shepherd lad was resting.

Returning to the *mirador*, we watched the sun sink in a golden glory over the misty blue sea. Then, lamenting the inevitable close of another perfect day, we drove back down the vagrant deviating way, feeling as though we had for a brief space been translated to a new and inspiring world.

It was with sincere regret that on the morning of Holy

Thursday we bade the Good Fairy farewell and, with Pepe again as charioteer, started on our drive back by way of Deyá, Miramar, and Valldemosa to Palma, where we had an afternoon engagement.

The scenery of this coast road must rank with the finest in the world, and on that March morning it was looking its loveliest. There was no wind, and both sea and sky were of that deep warm azure that makes so fitting a background to Balearic Island vistas.

On reaching the first houses of Deyá, we stopped the carriage, and alighting, climbed the easy ascent to the church. Halfway up the slope a French artist was painting, filling in his canvas with a delicate mosaic of heliotropes and pinks and purples.

He was enthusiastic about the pictorial quality of his surroundings. "Deyá," he declared, was "*un paradis pour les peintres.*"

When we peeped into the church Mass was being celebrated, and from the dusk of the interior the eyes of young communicants looked gravely at us from under their white wreaths.

Amid the clustered houses halfway down the hill a quaint old building proclaimed itself the Casa Consistorial. A worm-eaten stair led to the town hall. The iron-barred door of the dungeon opened at a touch, revealing its abandonment to the base uses of a lumber-shed. As far as we could see, the sole person in charge of the municipal chambers of Deyá was a year-old infant who occupied a low chair in the wide-roofed porch. He, however, maintained a magisterial dignity of demeanour throughout our cursory inspection of the premises.

As we left the valley the lofty crags and olive-clad slopes of Miramar rose about us. Their appearance was already familiar, and it was with a positive thrill of pleasure that we saw them again. Across the smooth surface of the Mediterranean a liner was passing, and we wondered what impression the passengers would get of the island.

We reached the Hospederia to find that for the moment the solitude that in November we had found so attractive had vanished. Evidently some periodic household inspection was in process, for in the wide doorway women sat mending house-linen, and children clinging to their skirts glanced shyly at us.

Fernando was absent, but Netta remembered us, and brought a large glass jug of the matchless Miramar water out to the *mirador* overhanging the sea just beyond the house whither Pepe had already carried our lunch.

Valldemosa was looking lovely in the fresh green beauty of spring, when an hour later we drove through its steep streets. The terrace gardens of the old Carthusian monastery were sweet with bud and blossom; and on the road beneath, a couple of bearded brown-robed Franciscan monks, treading softly on sandalled feet, gave us greeting.

As we left the gorge whose precipitous sides rose high overhead, an eagle, clearly outlined against the azure sky, gave the finishing touch to the wild beauty of the spot.

After the soul-inspiring grandeur of the everlasting hills, the plain, in spite of its luxuriant verdure, seemed tame; and even Palma appeared almost uninteresting. But it must be admitted that we were approaching it by the back way—by the kitchen entrance, so to speak—and in strict justice Palma should be entered by the front door, which is the port.

We had been invited to the palace of one of the noble Majorcan families to witness the passing of the Holy Thursday procession, and as we walked into Palma in the early evening, signs of preparation for the ceremonial were in evidence. Strangely clad figures, looking supernaturally tall in their long robes and high pointed hoods, were advancing towards the city. And their odd garb and masked faces gave them the appearance of beings strayed from out the dread days of the Spanish Inquisition.

By the gate of Santa Catalina one of the masked men—his face-covering thrown back—was having a heated argu-

ment with a *consumero* respecting a demand for payment of duty on the tall candle he carried. And within the gates like figures were to be seen all advancing towards some given point.

Outside the walls, where the buildings were comparatively new, the weirdly garbed shapes had seemed anachronisms, with more than a hint of the fancy dress carnival about them; but once within the walls of the ancient city, its narrow streets and tall closely shuttered dwellings made fitting setting for their mediæval guise.

In the streets ladies wearing mantillas and the costumes of black brocaded satin that they reserve for religious ceremonials were hastening, rosaries in hand, from one church to another. It is the custom to visit as many churches as possible on Holy Thursday. One lady we knew told us she had entered twenty-two that day.

Just opposite the old palace on whose balconies we were placed was one of the five churches through which the procession was to pass. In the roadway beneath, people had already gathered in expectation of its approach, and as we waited a sound of distant music, monotonous, penetrating, reached us. Then the town drummers, led by a small body of mounted civil guards (who defiled to a side and rode on to await their exit from the farther door of the building) appeared, and still vigorously plying their drum-sticks, marched into the church.

Very few members of the clergy were to be seen. The participants in the solemnity were almost entirely laymen. Representatives of many municipal bodies took part in the procession. There were civic authorities who carried a well-brushed silk hat in one of their white-gloved hands and a lighted candle in the other: doctors, members of the Red Cross Society, the town band, firemen, police, boys from the orphanage, old men from the workhouse—all evidently proudly conscious of the importance of their position.

At intervals a platform supporting one of the fine carved images from the Cathedral was borne by. When the

·PROCESSIONISTS OF HOLY THURSDAY·

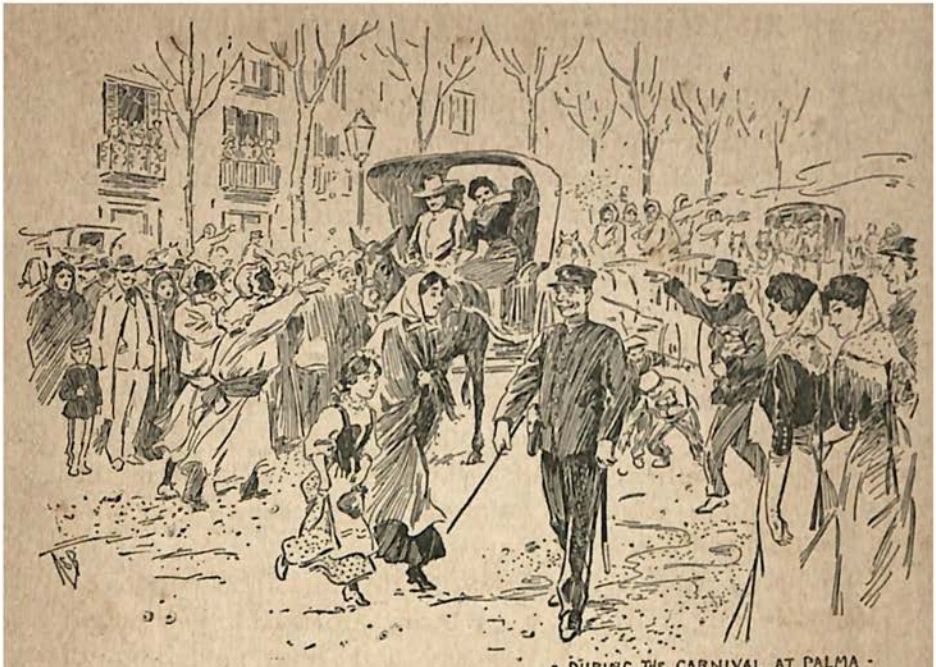
beautiful effigy of the Crucified Christ from the Church of La Sangre—that exquisite statue to whose flowing hair so many women have gloried to contribute their tresses—was carried past, the expectant crowd fell upon its knees before it.

To our untutored eyes a striking feature of the observance was the long succession of masked penitents, who, bearing tall lighted candles, walked in a double line. The hue of their robes varied from almost bright blue to the more effective black and white. Some were handsomely embroidered, others plain. Two of the men were laden with chains; and one at least trod the cobble stones with naked feet, in public fulfilment of a vow taken in a time of impending danger.

Most of the penitents held lace-edged handkerchiefs to protect the candles from the warmth of their hands; but in spite of the precaution certain of the candles already showed signs of softening. Many of the processionists bore emblems of the Passion, and one group as it entered the church broke into a mournful chant.

One of the observances of the function appeared to be the distribution of sweets. It was curiously incongruous to see the masked figures drop comfits into outstretched hands. We noted one pause before a pretty pink-clad señorita, who with her *dueña* was standing opposite our balcony, and signing to her to open the silver chain-bag she held, he poured into it a great handful of sugared almonds, to her blushing satisfaction.

The ceremony was imposing, touching, full of affecting suggestion; but even as we looked we could not help regretting that night had not fallen. Then the sight of a long sequence of quaint figures bearing the tall lighted tapers through the sombre crooked streets of the old town would have been much more impressive.



· DURING THE CARNIVAL AT PALMA ·

XXIII

OF FAIR WOMEN AND FINE WEATHER

THE first thing that impresses the traveller regarding the inhabitants of Majorca is the prevalence of good-looking young men and of pretty and graceful young women. Legend tells that in long-past days the people of Majorca were induced to make a treaty with the Dey of Algiers, by whose terms they yearly paid him a tribute of a hundred virgins, on condition that he restrained his piratical hordes from molesting the island. One feels that the Dey had an eye for beauty, for in these favoured isles to be handsome seems to be the rule, not the exception.

While young the Majorcan women are charming after a peculiarly feminine fashion. Compared with them French working women of the same class are hard of feature and masculine and ungainly of form. Their features are refined,

their complexions clear, their feet slender, their hands small, shapely, and well-cared for. When I mentally compared the condition of their hands with those of the rough toil-hardened hands of the women of the British working classes, I wondered if the substitution of charcoal for coal and of olive oil for grease in cooking could account for their better preservation.

To rise to the admired standard of aristocratic Majorca a man should look as though he had never done a day's work in his life. His hands should be soft, his skin untanned. A youth who had been yachting declared regretfully that on his return to Palma he was so brown that none of the girls would look at him!

To judge from a letter written to the Palma paper, *La Almudaina*, by a Majorcan on board an Italian liner bound for the Argentine, the delicacy and fine modelling of Majorcan hands would seem to be locally recognized and even gloried in.

> "What a misfortune," lamented the Voyager, "that the Italians have feet and hands so large, and fingers so twisted. Oh, hands of my country, with slender fingers and blushing nails, how my eyes feel home-sick to look upon you!"

Women of all classes wear long skirts, which on being daintily held up reveal natty petticoats; and all show a pleasing taste in footgear. Boots are cheap in Majorca, and the servant maid or the work-girl on their Sunday afternoon promenade on the Borne will wear smart shoes of patent leather or high-heeled boots of cream-hued kid.

Nothing more charming or more suitable for everyday wear than the native head-dresses—a mantilla of black lace for the mistress, a *rebozillo* of white muslin for her maid—could possibly be devised. While for gala occasions, such as a bull-fight, the white lace blossom-bedecked mantilla is positively captivating. And one sincerely regrets that,

in Palma at least, the hat is gradually making its way. The ladies who lead Palma fashion wear hats, and where they lead others hasten to follow.

A positive thrill of excitement runs through fashionable Palma when notice is received of the approaching visit of a milliner or costumier from Paris or Madrid. The hotel where the private view of the new season's styles is held is thronged with eager buyers. When the cream of the stock has been secured, the enterprising adventurer disposes of the skim milk to the second-rate local shops, and sets sail with full pockets. The pity is that, with both the tradition and the usage of so picturesque a national custom for guidance, matrons who themselves rigidly adhere to the mantilla should, doubtless from the best possible motives, condemn their young daughters to wear hats.

Even at the best the prevalent mode in hats was ugly, and possibly the choice in Palma was limited, but it must be admitted that in the matter of hat selection their customary refinement of taste appeared occasionally to have deserted the Palma mothers. It was sad to see the nice modest face of a young girl overshadowed by a huge erection of green or red felt that was trimmed with a wild scurry of dishevelled plumage—a style of headgear that might not have looked out of place in the Old Kent Road, but which looked hopelessly incongruous over the grave expectant eyes of a young Majorcan lady.

Contrasted with the life of an English maiden, which is full of varied employments and endless social entertainments, the existence of a Majorcan young lady would appear to be needlessly lacking in interests.

She does not ride, or shoot, or golf, or cycle, or play tennis or croquet, or do gardening, or smoke cigarettes. She has little concern with politics, and she is content to leave the care of the poor to an efficient staff of clergy.

She has been carefully and thoroughly educated. She has probably had a special governess to teach her English, another for French or Italian The private chaplain may

have instructed her in Spanish, and she probably has a good knowledge of classical music.

But, her course of study over, there seems little left for her to do. In the morning she goes to Mass; later she performs miracles of intricate embroidery. In the afternoon she drives out, in winter always in a closed carriage, and nearly always in the same direction, which is westwards towards Ben Dinat. Sometimes the carriage stops, and the occupants, alighting, take a little promenade; then, re-entering the carriage, drive back to the tall old palace in some narrow street in the city. After Mass on Sundays she strolls on the Borne; from four o'clock till sunset she may promenade on the ramparts or on the mole. That is the substance of a Palma girl's exercise, and everywhere she goes her footsteps are carefully shadowed by those of her *dueña.*

Private dances, musical evenings, afternoon "At Homes," private theatricals, are almost unknown. There are plenty of house-parties, especially in summer, when the family is living at one or other of its country seats; but those gatherings are usually confined to relatives. Then there are the infrequent bull-fights; and occasionally a dance is given at the fashionable club, the *Circulo Mallorquin*—a festivity that begins at four o'clock in the afternoon and ends at eight o'clock in the evening.

Sometimes the wife of the Captain-General gives an evening reception; or the rare function of a real ball sends a flutter through the higher circles of the island. Then and then only does the aristocratic Majorcan maiden permit her graceful shoulders to be seen. Frequently, carefully chaperoned, she goes to a theatre, and sits in the family box throughout the interminable waits between the acts. At the Carnival, which occupies three afternoons in the week preceding Lent, she can appear on a balcony or in a carriage on the Borne; and even, such is the *abandon* of that time of licence, go to the extreme length of exchanging repartee in the form of confetti or paper streamers with an admiring foe.

Yet already there are signs of the far-reaching influence of

an English queen. Certain of the noble families have young English ladies to teach their language to their daughters, and the few Majorcans we heard speaking English in Palma spoke it beautifully. Nowadays a Majorcan lady is not ashamed to admit that she dislikes bull-fights. A few years ago such an admission would have been accounted the rankest heresy. And Palma residents say they can tell the girls who have English governesses—they always walk so quickly!

And here I may say that any young English lady, of good family and of the Roman Catholic religion, who is so adventurous as to journey to Majorca to fill a post as companion or governess can do so with the assurance of meeting with every possible consideration. She will not get a large salary, for money has a higher value in Majorca than in Britain, but she will be treated like a princess. I know of one case where a Palma family, who had engaged an English governess, went to the trouble and expense of having a bedroom specially decorated and furnished for her, after a high-art chamber pictured in the *Studio*, that the expected guest might feel more at home than if her room had been fitted up in the native fashion.

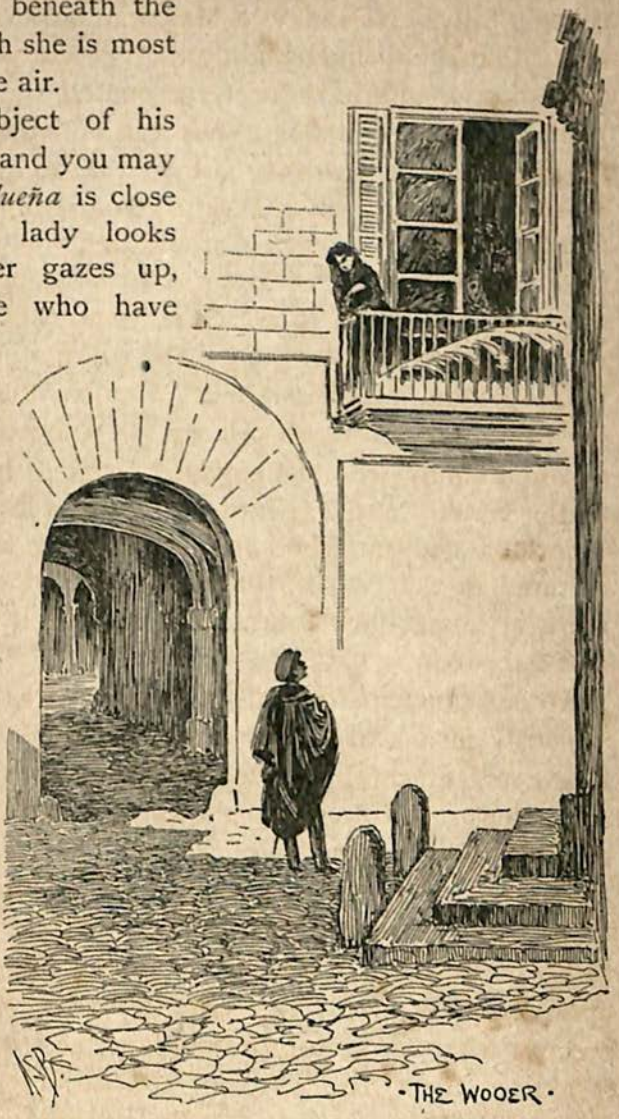
To our emancipated way of thinking there was something curiously mediæval in the careful chaperonage to which the lovely and graceful Majorcan girls were subjected. And the scrupulous separation of the sexes seemed to argue distrust, of the maidens as well as of the men.

Matrimony is a popular institution in Majorca, and when a damsel has reached a marriageable age an eligible suitor is rarely awanting. It is when that suitor has cast the glad eye upon the lady of his choice that matters would appear to proceed after an unsatisfactory and yet most conspicuous fashion.

Suppose Don Sebastian desires to pay court to a lady whom he has seen taking her carefully chaperoned walks, he writes a letter asking her permission to do so. If the reply is in the negative the matter ends. If it is in the affirmative the Don puts on his cloak, which is frequently picturesquely

lined with scarlet, and hies himself to the palace of his inamorata, but in place of boldly knocking at the front door and being ushered into one of the reception-rooms, he takes up his position beneath the balcony on which she is most likely to take the air.

When the object of his desire appears—and you may be certain the *dueña* is close at hand—the lady looks down, the lover gazes up, and only those who have put the matter to the test can judge how physically harassing it is to breathe impassioned nothings to someone who is suspended above your head.



At this stage the matter halts for a period that sometimes runs into years—for in these restful latitudes even the course of true love moves slowly. Then, permission having been asked and granted, Don Sebastian may accompany the lady and her chaperon in their walks for a period approaching six months. When

this point is reached, the parents of Don Sebastian, carrying a handsome present, which most frequently takes the form of a ring, call on the guardians of the lady, and, their consent to the prospective union having been gained, the suitor is at length admitted to the house, and the public cease to see his love-lorn figure beneath the balcony. Even when matters have crawled to this advanced stage the visits of the Don are merely ceremonious calls, paid strictly under the watchful eyes of the *dueña*. And I am told it is not until the night before the wedding that he is favoured with an invitation to dine at the home of his bride.

In order to impart the proper aspect of romance to this oft-played balcony scene, the actors ought to be, and often are, young and graceful. When they are otherwise it is only too easy to give a ludicrous rendering of the drama.

During our early months at the Casa Tranquila we sometimes, in the evenings, passed a tall house, from a balcony on whose third storey a plump lady would be shouting down coy replies to the blandishments of an elderly swain who had to stand out in the middle of the road in order to see his sweetheart. After a time both balcony and street were vacant; presumably the suitor had been admitted inside. Then a *to-let* bill appeared on the balcony. The little romance had evidently ended happily, and the mature love-birds had built a nest elsewhere.

Our six months' experience of the Balearic Isles fostered the belief that we had discovered the ideal winter climate. Perhaps we had chanced upon an abnormally fine season, though I question that; but certain it is that from the middle of October, when we entered the bay and saw Palma looking celestial in the rosy light of dawn, until the second week in January, the weather was perfect.

Spain is proverbially sunny. Against England's 1,400 and Italy's 2,300 annual hours of sunshine, Spain offers 3,000. With this grand allowance of sunshine the Majorcan heat is temperate. Statistics show that during the Balearic summer the thermometer rarely rises above 90° Fahr., while in winter

it seldom falls below 40° Fahr. A gentleman who has passed his life in Palma told us that twice only had he seen snow fall—once when he was twelve year old, and again a few years ago.

Except for a sultry day or two in the end of October the atmosphere was only pleasantly warm. Week succeeded week when the sea reflected a sky of cloudless glowing azure, when the air was soft and yet exhilarating, and we could both walk and bask with pleasure.

Rain never comes before it is welcome in Majorca. Sometimes the welcome waits long before it is claimed.

When after an unbroken succession of days or weeks, or it may be months, of unbroken fine weather, one is awakened by the sound of rain falling in torrents on the tiled roofs, it is to rejoice with the knowledge that the thirsty crops are already drinking in the moisture, that the diminished store in the wells is being replenished, that your oranges are swelling, and that your lemons will soon lose the hardness of the nether millstone and become available for lemonade.

There is no hesitation about Majorcan rain. It does not play at being wet; it is simply drenching. And when rain comes, no man, however distinguished the uniform he wears or elevated his position (he may even be mounted on a panniered mule), hesitates to carry an umbrella. *Consumeros*, carbineers, farm labourers, postmen, all shelter under them. Nobody thinks it funny to meet a solemn policeman carrying a sword, a revolver, *and* an umbrella.

After the middle of January the weather changed. The temperature fell, and for nearly a fortnight cold winds raged. Warm wraps were brought out of the trunks where they had hitherto lain, and in the evenings a wood fire became a much appreciated luxury.

It was curious to note how speedily even this only comparatively cold weather made its malign influence felt on a people accustomed to warmth and sunshine. Colds and coughs abounded. Most of our Majorcan acquaintances

appeared to suffer. As one lady said resignedly, "It is the tribute we must pay to winter."

Even the Boy spent several days in bed with a cold, reading all the French and Spanish novels he could beg or borrow, and comforting himself with the reflection that had he been well the weather for the first time during the winter would have made it impossible for him to paint outside.

Yet, had three months of sunshine not made us critical, we would never have grumbled at these few days of cold wind. Adopting unconsciously the local opinion of the weather, I found myself commiserating the Squire and his Lady, who had recently arrived from England.

"What a pity you didn't come earlier than you did. There was no bad weather till you came."

"But we've had *lovely* weather!" the Lady said, opening wide eyes of surprise. "Why, we've been out long walks every day. It isn't really cold, and there's only been one shower, and that fell at night."

Remembering our British standard I was dumb.

Though Majorca was free from fog, sometimes on an absolutely windless morning a light mist would envelop Palma and the smoke from the works in the Calle de la Fábrica would hang heavy in the still air. Then the Boy would hasten to say that we might be in Bradford—a town, by the way, that he knows only by repute. But with the rising of even the faintest breeze the highest spires of the Cathedral would appear out of the mist as though, through some supernal agency, they were suspended in mid-air. Then gradually, as if a veil were being slowly drawn aside, the city would again become visible.

With early February our radiant weather returned, and heads were shaken, for the young crops showed sign of wilting under the long-continued drought. Over a period of fifteen days the churches sent up special petitions for rain —petitions that must have been echoed in the heart of every man that owned a "possession," or farmed a patch of ground, or even rented a garden plot.

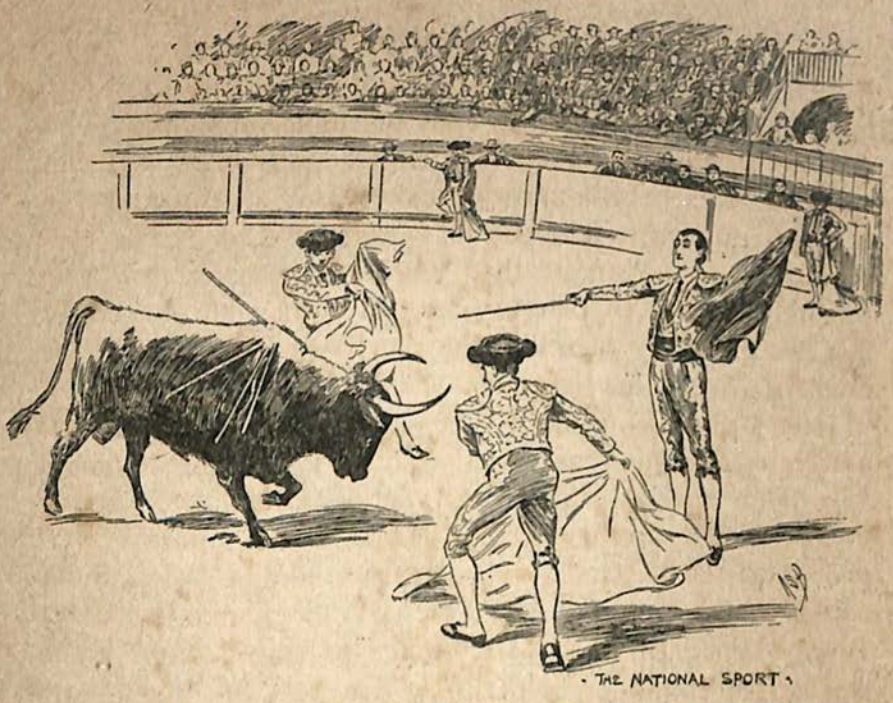
We were at Sóller when for two days and two nights the rain fell incessantly, soaking the parched soil and transforming the dry *torrentes* into raging rivers. Then it suddenly ceased, leaving us with the glory of snow-tipped mountains seen against a glowing blue sky.

Late in March and early in April rain again fell, delaying the annual ceremony of the Swearing to the Flag, but making the spindling corn fill out in a magical fashion and the beans that had begun to shrivel and blacken become erect and juicy. When we left Majorca on the last day of April all fears of the fate of the crops had been removed; figs and vines were budding, almond-trees were luxuriant in foliage, and the far-spreading meadows were covered with grain that gave promise of a rich harvest.

We had thought vegetables and fruit so cheap that it astonished us to hear the natives declare that *now* prices would fall—that it was through the past two successive dry summers that they had risen so high!

Residents told us that for nine months out of the year the weather in Palma might be relied upon to be delightful, but that during the three hot months—which were July, August, and September—the moist, damp heat was very relaxing. Then it is that the aristocracy, temporarily vacating their sombre palaces in the narrow streets, remove their entire establishment to one or other of their country seats, while people of smaller social importance flock to their villas at the Terreno, or Porto Pi, or Son Rapiña, or even to modest cottages at our little Son Españolet.

To us there seemed something funny in the notion of people having coast residences that were within a twopence-halfpenny car-drive of their town homes. But it is undoubtedly pleasant to live in a land where, by a change of locality entailing, at the most, a two hours' drive, one can avoid any extreme of either heat or cold.



XXIV

OF ODDS AND ENDS

IN Majorca there are hotels to suit all purses. At Palma the Grand Hotel is probably the best suited to tourists, especially if there are ladies in the party; while those who would like to see a real Majorcan *fonda* of the better class and eat good native cooking should go to Barnils' in the Calle del Conquistador.

The sum charged is invariably by the day, and varies according to the pretensions of the establishment. In most hotels it includes both wine and aerated waters. On arrival it is always well to inquire what the rate will be and whether it includes the little breakfast. If the traveller thinks the terms asked too high and says frankly what he is prepared to pay, he is almost certain to be accommodated at his own price.

Our experience of the country *fondas* was that they were

infinitely superior to British inns of similar standing. The cooking was far better and the prices much lower. If one knows a little Spanish and can make a bargain, three pesetas a day is quite a usual price for a country *fonda*. The best should not charge more than four, and the catering is surprisingly good. In remote places beef may be scarce, but fish are generally plentiful, the rye bread is good, and the omelets are always excellent.

Here I might say that in every instance we found the beds admirably appointed and comfortable. The Majorcan housewife takes special pride in her daintily embroidered house-linen. Toilet arrangements are apt to be primitive, and, except at the larger hotels, baths are unknown. An india-rubber bath is easy to pack and will be found invaluable. In obedience to Baedeker's advice to travellers in Spain, we carried round a tin of insect-powder. But though the Balearic Isles are in Spain in one respect, at least they are not of it, for at the end of our wanderings the tin was still unopened.

In Palma there are several clubs, notably the *Circulo Mallorquin*, the *Club Real de Regatas*, the *Veda*, and others, political, military, and social, to which the desirable foreigner would find little difficulty in being elected. The subscriptions, which are collected monthly, would strike a London clubman as ridiculously low. He would find his fellow-members both courteous and charming, but disinclined to join in any exertion. And unless in very exceptional instances their acquaintance would begin and end at the club.

The Majorcan does not go in for sport, though there is a sports club. He detests walking, and very infrequently plays tennis. The entire group of islands does not boast a golf course. An English resident who was trying to get up a golf club found the natives apathetic; but the invasion of half a dozen good enthusiasts would probably change this attitude. Many of the Palma men keep boats. Yachting seems to be the only occupation they incline to; and it

would be hard to conceive of a more delightful pastime than cruising about that picturesque coast.

Furnished houses are difficult to find, anywhere in Majorca. But in Palma unfurnished flats can be had. We saw quite a nice one in a good locality that was let at forty pesetas a month—a rent that included all taxes. At the delightful suburbs of the Terreno and Porto Pi, houses with exquisite views of the sea can be obtained. But everywhere to the foreigner who does not speak Spanish terms are said to rise.

Even in the capital town the wages of both male and female servants are very low. For about twelve pounds a year I imagine one might have the pick of ordinary female servants, the price paid men being alike small. But it would be futile to expect to find the carefully drilled attendance with which home usage has accustomed us.

To our more conservative minds, the attitude of the island servitors towards their employers seems strangely familiar. And their dress is apt to be informal. Once when I was paying an afternoon call in Palma the man-servant entered the drawing-room to receive an order sketchily attired in a pink undervest and trousers. And throughout the visit his voice trilling roundelays in the adjacent pantry made unusual accompaniment to our polite conversation. At the moment I confess I was surprised, but that was during our very early days in Majorca. A few months later I doubt if I would have noticed anything odd in either occurrence.

The cost of living strikes any one accustomed to British housekeeping as small—not perhaps because food is so very cheap, for it is dearer in Palma than in the country towns and rural districts, and much dearer than in Minorca and Iviza; but because life is much simpler and less pretentious and conventional than in England.

Certain imported commodities such as sugar are expensive, consequently the sweets that with people of the same class at

home would be an everyday article of diet are reserved for special occasions, particularly the frequently recurring feast days.

Residence in Majorca entails no exhausting social demands on either the strength or the bank account. Even among themselves the inhabitants but rarely entertain beyond the circle of their own relatives. And their meetings with friends seem confined to the theatre, the promenade, the bull-fights, or at one of the infrequent entertainments given at the principal clubs.

The payment of fourpence secured a stall at the combination of cinematograph and variety show that during our stay in Palma was the fashionable form of amusement. And without further disbursement the visitor who inclined that way was entitled to wait on through the interval between the two houses and witness the whole performance over again. For plays or for light opera the fees advanced a little, though I doubt if they ever rose to the sum charged for the pit of a London theatre.

The bull-fights patronized by Majorcan society are those given in summer. We went to one held at Easter, and though society was absent the people were there in numbers that filled two-thirds of the Plaza de Toros, which seats five thousand. The action was mercifully modified, for no horses were exposed to the attacks of the bulls. We entered the place with our national prejudices strong upon us, and left it with a conflict of mingled attraction and repulsion. When a bull knocked down a clumsy *matador* who had been making painful but futile attempts to give him the fatal stroke, we lamented that the bull failed to kill his torturer. Yet when another and more skilful *matador* by a single thrust mercifully vanquished his bull, we shared something of the enthusiasm of the spectators, who threw hats and cigars into the arena, and finally bursting in, carried the hero of the moment shoulder-high round the ring.

It had certainly not been a fashionable function. From a neighbouring box our Vigilante bowed graciously, and

Bartolomé, who was of the Vigilante's party, beamed broadly upon us. When we left the Plaza de Toros we encountered Maria, who was chaperoning two tall daughters in mantillas. And as we walked back along the ramparts we overtook Mrs. Mundo trotting homewards with her twin girls, whose uncovered locks were tied up with ribbons till they looked like a couple of nice little ponies on their way to a horse show.

For certain temperaments Majorca has a curious magnetic attraction. People who have first set foot upon its shores with comparative indifference find themselves returning again and yet again; with each visit becoming more under the thraldom of its charm. The Squire and his Lady, who half a dozen years ago visited the island because so many other Mediterranean resorts were already known to them, have returned with increased anticipation of pleasure each successive spring since. And during our stay in Palma we made the congenial acquaintance of a Scots lady and gentleman who find the glamour of these fair islands strong enough to induce them to make a yearly pilgrimage thither from the North of Scotland.

Majorca is a delightful place to loaf in. I know no place where one more keenly experiences the mere joy of being alive. In that ideal temperature, under those cloudless skies, one at first feels content to let the days drift past, taking no heed for the things of the morrow. But the air has an amazingly rejuvenating effect. In a short time years drop off—one loses superfluous weight and regains colour. Exercise ceases to be exertion and becomes a keen delight. Walks that formerly ranked as a day's excursion become merely a pleasant stroll, to be undertaken between an early tea and a late dinner.

In Palma something to interest or touch one was always happening. Once—it was on the first day of Februàry—we entered the usually deserted Rambla to find a crowd composed chiefly of young men, all of the same age, gathered in front of the barracks. The majority had the sunburnt complexion of the rustic. A few were evidently of higher social

- CALLE DE LA PORTELLA
PALMA -

standing. Many girls and a few old peasants fringed the crowd. It was the occasion of the annual drawing of lots for the enrolment of the young men of the Palma district, who were to spend their next three years in the army.

Some of the lads peered anxiously in at the closed gates of the barracks; others concealed their concern and chatted gaily with their friends. Military service in that land of sunshine is not arduous. Recruits thus drawn by lot are never sent off their native island, and to flirt with pretty maid-servants on the Borne on a Sunday afternoon—which to the casual observer appears to be the leading labour of the Majorcan force—can hardly be termed hard labour. So no doubt many of the rustics were already wondering if they would not look better in shakos and crimson breeches than they did in the blue cotton and goatskins of their shepherds' dress.

At length the gates were thrown open and sergeants called upon the conscripts to enter. Many paused to wave farewells, and almost all saluted or raised their hats as they advanced to put their fortunes to the test. A few of the more smartly dressed strolled nonchalantly in, smoking cigarettes, and we guessed that they, following the native love of a gamble, had already paid a hundred crowns to the insurance company that, in the event of their drawing an unlucky number, would forfeit to the State the three hundred crowns that would purchase their exemption from the three years of service.

A period of suspense dragged past. Then a sympathetic movement of the crowd intimated the deliverance of the first two freed men, who, as they left the gate, threw high in air the couple of breakfast rolls that, with two reales, are presented to every man who has drawn a lucky number. Others relieved and hilarious followed quickly, but many pretty girls and old men waited in vain for the return of the candidates that fate had decreed were to swell the ranks of the standing army. The barracks had swallowed them up and they were seen no more. Perhaps they also

had rolls and reales; perhaps they were elated at the prospect of town life; perhaps they already looked back with longing to their almond-trees and goatskins!

For the adventurous, Majorca has plenty of peaks to climb, coasts to navigate, shrines to visit, caves to explore. The distances between the known points of interest—and there are very many places still unexploited—are so easy that a tourist with only a few days at his disposal can visit the most noted parts.

The two brothers in whose interesting company we visited the Dragon Caves had only five days to spend in Majorca. But even in so brief a space of time they succeeded in seeing and in doing much. Their method of mapping out their time was so admirable that I am tempted to quote it.

On Monday night they crossed from Barcelona, arriving at Palma early on Tuesday morning. Having breakfasted on the steamer, they caught the early train for Manacor, where they lunched before driving to the caves. After dining and sleeping at Manacor they took the train on Wednesday morning to the railway terminus at La Puebla, and from there drove to the old towns of Pollensa and Alcudia. That accomplished, they journeyed by rail to Inca, where they passed the night, returning on Thursday by the morning train to Palma, where they spent the day visiting as many places of interest as possible. On Friday they drove to Sóller by way of Valldemosa, Miramar, and Deyá. Rising early on Saturday morning they drove to Fornalutx, and starting from there, climbed the Puig Mayor, getting a superb view from the summit. In the afternoon they drove back to Palma in time to catch the mail boat to Barcelona. The weather had been perfect, and they were able to carry out their well-planned expedition without interruption.

For those who enjoy gentle exploration Palma makes an admirable centre. A good pedestrian could encompass the island on foot, and a journey more full of varied scenery or among pleasanter or more unsophisticated folk could hardly

be imagined. Those of less energetic nature would find much of interest within very easy walking distance.

It is almost impossible—in Palma at least—to hire mules, but driving is comparatively cheap. Every few minutes tram-cars run to Porto Pi, where there is a good aquarium, with, when we saw it, a splendid display of writhing octopi.

A mile beyond the car terminus is Cas Catala, where there is a delightfully situated hotel. Just beyond the hotel are lovely walks through the pine woods that border the sea, and pretty little bays, in one of which—that a little way past the *carabineros'* hut, I think—I got some nice little shells and quite a lot of sponges that had been washed up by the sea.

Genova, which is a very short walk inland from the car terminus at Porto Pi, makes an attractive point for a little excursion. In a garden off one of the by-ways is the entrance to a recently discovered cave, which is the property of the landlord of the little *taverna*—the Casa Morena —who discovered it when he was digging a well. The cave, though small in extent, resembles the Dragon Caves in miniature, and has beautiful stalactites and stalagmites which are both fine in form and quite unblackened by smoke.

The village church, which until lately was a favourite place of pilgrimage, has many fine altar-pieces and other paintings, and it has the rare quality of being so well-lighted that visitors are able to admire their beauties.

In one of the side chapels is a delicately modelled recumbent wax figure of a young girl. Another chapel has a small square glass case containing a representation of the Nativity that is peculiarly interesting because of the purely local dress of certain of the figures. The Virgin holding the Holy Child is seated in the centre. At her right stands an elderly man, apparently meant for Joseph. It was surely without humorous intent that the devotee who fashioned his garments garbed him in the quaint old Majorcan dress of abnormally wide blue breeches. After seeing Joseph's

dress it is not the least surprising to notice that two women who are less important actors in the scene wear their hair in pigtails and the native *rebozillos.*

From the hill-side that rises behind the church, where the prickly pear grows in great profusion, one can enjoy a glorious panoramic view of the coast.

For slightly longer excursions diligences leave Palma almost daily for all sorts of out-of-the-way and wholly charming places, such as Esporlas, Andraitx, Lluchmayor, Sóller, Estallenchs, Calviá, and Valldemosa. And if the traveller is wise and hastens to book the front seat he will escape danger of death by compression, and be in a position to enjoy a leisurely and comprehensive view of the country.

It is well worth while, when intending to remain overnight at a town, to arrange to arrive on the eve of the weekly market. For market morning brings many quaint rural people flocking into town on panniered mules or in odd ramshackle conveyances. Sunday is the market at Pollensa, and there the traveller may see a profusion of the old men of the zouave-like breeches. San Sellas and Binisalem hold their markets on Sunday also. That of Manacor is on Monday. Artá, Montuiri, Llubí, and Porreras hold market on Tuesday. Wednesday is the day at Sineu, and Thursday at Inca, Muro, and Andraitx. Lluchmayor has Friday, and the day of the week at Palma is Saturday, when the country folk bring in the harvest of their fields and hold a little market of their own in the Plaza del Mercado, under the shadow of the high-towered Church of San Nicolas. Early in May Sóller holds a three days' *fiesta*, when a historic incident of the landing and repulsion of a band of piratical Moors is enacted with great spirit by the people of the town.

A hint that may prove useful to any one arriving at some remote place where there is no *fonda* is to ask to be directed to the schoolmaster. He is certain to know Spanish, may be pleased to meet a foreigner, and is sure to be able to

recommend a lodging. It is to the courteous schoolmaster of Santañy that we were indebted for this suggestion.

Failing the presence of a schoolmaster, the civil guard is a good person to apply to. They are said to be a fine and absolutely reliable class of men. An artist friend chancing at nightfall to light upon a village where there was no inn, applied to the civil guard, who not only gave him a room in his own house, but appeared in the morning to offer the use of toilet appliances in the form of a comb and a pot of pomade.

The Balearic Islands appear to offer a good field to the entomologist. A friend who visited Majorca during February has given me this list of the butterflies and moths that, even at that early season, he saw in plenty, mostly within a few miles of Palma: Bath White, Cabbage or Common White, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow, Brimstone, Wall Brown, Holly Blue, Small Copper, Swallow Tail, and the Humming-bird Hawk Moth.

As the spring advanced and the giant poppies I had sown in November became a four-feet-high hedge, butterflies—strange, to me at least, and very beautiful—fluttered into the little garden of the Casa Tranquila, and probably not finding the poppies so luscious as their brilliant appearance had led them to expect, speedily fluttered out again. They did not make their home with us, as had the big locust that, in the late autumn, I captured when he was feasting on a moth in the shrubby field behind the convent. Bringing the prisoner home in my handkerchief, I set him on a pink ivy-geranium that flourished in one of the big green flower-pots on the veranda.

He seemed well content with his new quarters, for there he stayed all winter, taking up his position first in the tall scented verbena, and, when that lost its leaves, changing his perch to an adjacent almond-tree, as though he knew that would be the first to bloom.

Very early in the year he vanished, and we thought he had gone for good. But just as the first pale blossoms were

opening in the almond groves he re-appeared, bringing with him the female of his species, and together in connubial amity they shared his old home in the almond-tree. When the pale rose-tinted blossoms had fallen, and the grey-green velvet pods of the young almonds were emerging from the crimson calyxes, the locust and his bride deserted us to seek a wider pasturage.

Though we wandered far from beaten tracks, the sole trace of reptiles encountered was an occasional discarded snake-skin. In Iviza lovely green and golden lizards and highly-varnished toy frogs in all "art" shades abounded, but we saw none of either in Majorca.

Our only insect pests were mosquitoes—who, probably recognizing an alien and attractive flavour in our blood, were a disturbing nocturnal influence until, with the aid of a few yards of mosquito netting, we succeeded in frustrating their knavish tricks. Even by day they were not invariably quiescent; but the mosquito is a gentleman. He always gives warning before attacking an enemy, and when we met in open combat, there was something of the joy of battle in the defence. According to local report, the tenure of his days should have ended with November; but it was not until a fall of the temperature about the middle of January that our assailant withdrew his battalions and left us in peace.

Though our visit was a winter one, the wild flowers were an unfailing source of pleasure. The season was unusually dry, yet I never took a country walk without finding some blossom that was new to me.

When we arrived in October the rocky slopes about Porto Pi were covered by a royal carpet of the purple autumnal crocus. The last of the sea lavender was fading, but horned poppies and chicory were in bloom. It was there, too, that in November we found the curiously shaped brown and green wild arums that are known in America as "Dutchmen's pipes," and locally referred to as *frares*, whose acquaintance we afterwards made at Andraitx. In April, when we left Majorca, pretty little white and lavender iris starred the ground

and rich purple mallows and golden mesembryanthemums covered the rocks of Porto Pi.

The beautiful coast about Cas Catalá had a herbage of its own. Tall flowering heath, a persistently blooming plant with dark blue buttons, and delicate yellow rock roses were, as the months slipped past, succeeded by a fine display of cistus.

Throughout the whole time of our stay a constant succession of sweet lavender blossomed on the grey-green bushes. Asphodel, too, abounded. The first to open was the smaller species, with its rushy foliage and slender spikes of bloom. In January the tall rods of the poet's asphodel rose in such profusion that we were forced to give it place as the typical island flower. Forced reluctantly, I confess, for to some the odour of the tall asphodel, when growing in quantity, is far from pleasant.

It was at Sóller, that district of piquant contrasts, that we saw the delicate greenhouse maidenhair-fern growing in masses with English ivy along walls, or draping the moist sides of the water runnels.

It was at Sóller, too, that we first made the acquaintance of the ten-inch-high daisy. There was little of the character of its Scots relative, the "wee, modest, crimson-tippéd flower," in this aspiring plant. But the Balearic Islands have another form of the *Bellis perennis*, a lavender daisy, that sustains the family reputation for humility by cowering close to the soil.

The winter had been so dry that the flowers of early spring were disappointing. I found a few purple anemones where I had expected to see hundreds, and gleaned a handful or two of narcissus from the dry bed of the torrent where I had hoped to gather baskets full.

But with the coming of the long-hoped-for rain the earth gave up her secrets, and secrets worth knowing they proved themselves. There were amazing orchids—little round-bellied flies, so life-like that one half-expected to hear them buzz; or glorious travesties of insects that never were, some with

bodies of glittering metallic blue daintily edged with brown fur, others with delicate wings of rosy heliotrope.

It was odd to find garden pets—grape hyacinths, gladiolus, iris—leading a gipsy life on those sunny slopes, and odder still to discover begonias, or even *Nigella damascena*, camping out, as it were. One felt inclined to demand to be told why they were shirking their obvious duty of beautifying gloomy British gardens.

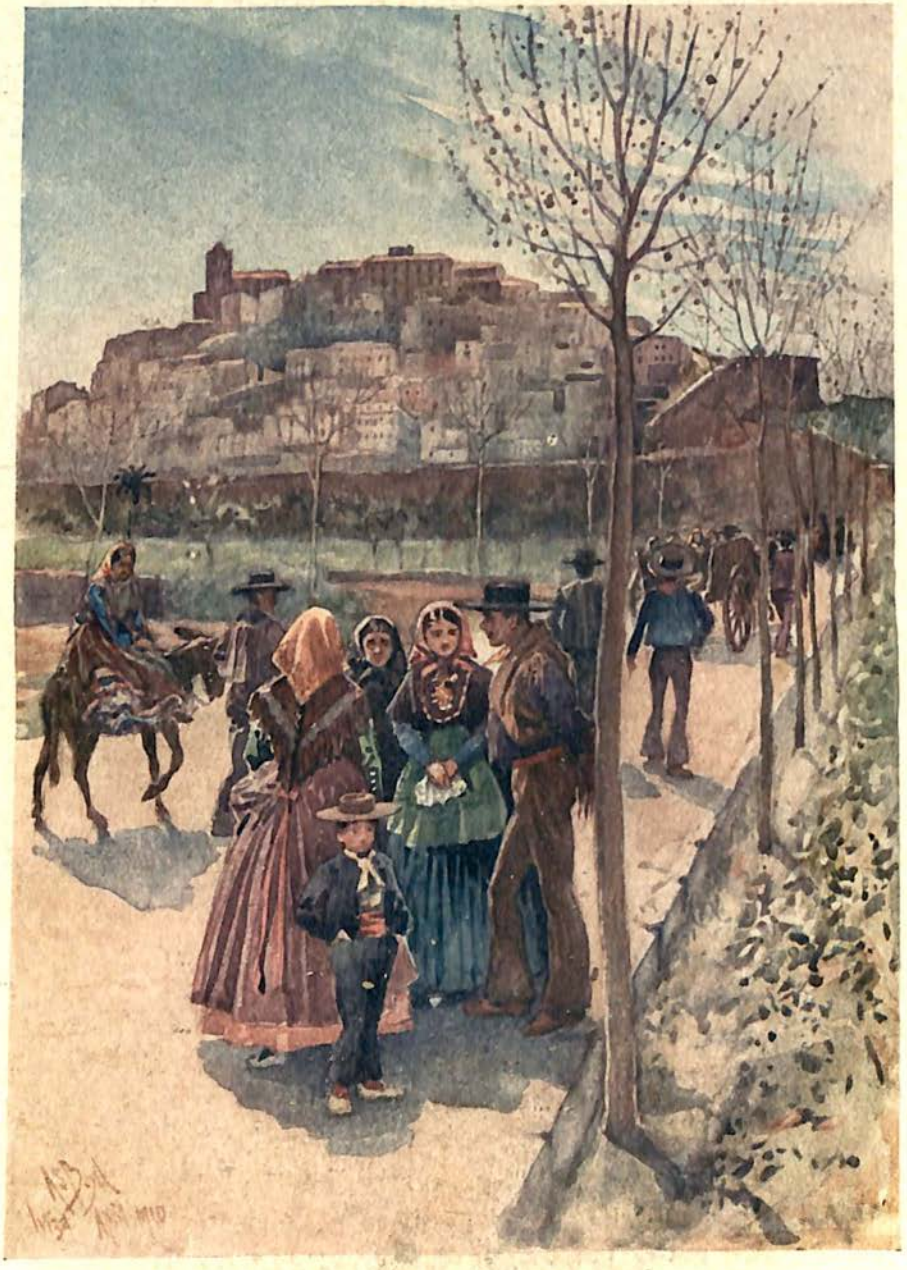
The following list of the rarer Balearic plants, given me by a noted Scottish gardener, is specially interesting as showing the wide range of the island flora: Anthyllis cytisoides, Astragalus poterium, Cynoglossum pictum, Daphne vallæoides, Delphinium pictum, Digitalis dubia, Genista cineria, Hedysarum coronarium, Hedysarum spinosissimum, Helianthemum serræ, Helianthemum salicifolium, Helichrysum Lamarkii, Hippocrepis balearica, Hypericum balearicum, Lavatera cretica, Lavatera minoricensis, Leucojum Hernandezii, Linaria triphylla, Linaria fragilis, Lotus creticus, Melilotus messanensis, Micromeria Rodriguezii, Micromeria filiformis, Ononis crispa, Ononis breviflora, Ononis minutissima, Pastinæa lucida, Phlomis italica, Polygala rupestris, Scutellaria Vigineuxii, Senciò Rodriguezii, Sibthorpia africana, Silene rubella, Sonchus spinosus, Vicia atropurpurea.

Perhaps it was because wild flowers bloomed all through the months that the native children did not care to gather them, and that indifference to natural blossoms prevailed in all classes of the community. It seemed as though the Majorcans had not yet realized the decorative value of flowers. One rarely saw cut flowers used on the table or in the reception-rooms even of people on whose country estates roses and violets blossomed all the year round. I never saw flowers for sale in the big daily market, and the few clusters that in spring the countryfolk brought in to the Saturday market would scarcely have sufficed to trim one fashionable hat.

In February, when the rose-coloured blossoms of the

cistus were beginning to open on the uplands, the brown-cheeked shepherd boys began to look for the young shoots of the wild asparagus, which they made into little bunches for sale, bound round with broad asphodel leaves fastened with long, sharp prickles.

Though a gourmet could hardly have taken exception to the flavour of the asparagus thus gathered, he might have objected to the size, for the shoots were seldom larger than that sold in London under the mysterious name of "sprue." But the flavour was delicious, and when one added the pleasure of gathering to the value when found, the wild asparagus was worth its weight in gold. While the season lasted we often brought in a bunch or two from our sunset strolls, and these occasions were signalized by the appearance of asparagus omelet at supper.



SUNDAY MORNING AT IVIZA

XXV

IVIZA—A FORGOTTEN ISLE

WITH regard to Iviza, the third in importance of the Balearic Isles, even the usually omniscient Baedeker maintains a dignified reserve. And indeed Iviza is so little visited that while the *Isleña Marítima Compania Mallorquina de Vapores* convey passengers thither from Majorca for fifteen pesetas first class, or eleven pesetas second, they charge eighteen and thirteen pesetas respectively to bring them back to Majorca, which looks as though they thought voyagers might require to be cajoled into going to Iviza, but would need no inducement to return.

From the records in existence one gathers that no relics of the Stone Age have been discovered in Iviza, though traces left by many dynasties prove that from very early times occupation of the lovely and fertile isle was hotly contested. Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Romans, Greeks, Vandals, Saracens, and Moors fought for its possession, but since the Aragonese invasion of the thirteenth century Iviza has belonged to Spain.

We had heard strange tales of the Ivizans—told, it must be admitted, by people who avowedly had never set foot on the island—grim stories of ferocity, of the crack of the ready pistol, of the slash of the handy knife. We had also heard that these grim islanders were invariably kind to strangers. Now we were on the way to judge for ourselves.

While the departure of the Barcelona boat lures all Palma to the mole, only a handful of spectators was assembled

when, at noon on the 8th of April, the *Lulio* steamed westwards.

It was a fine day with a brisk head-wind. Like the high mountains around Sóller, the waves were white-crested, and for the first three hours the voyage was a delight. As the *Lulio* skirted the coast we enjoyed identifying the places now familiar to us by land. The little bays beyond Cas Catala, Ben Dinat among its woods, the windmills above the town of Andraitx, and the long, high islet of Dragonera.

As the heliotrope mountains of Majorca receded into the distance, the brilliance faded. From warm azure the sea changed to purple, from purple to grey, and the wind blew keenly against us. The *Lulio* is only some 600 tons, and there was little shelter on the saloon deck, which is forward of the funnel. We felt inclined to envy the Ivizan passengers, who, camped on the snug lower deck, first ate strange messes, then after a brief but busy interlude of regret, curled up on their bundles and went snugly to sleep.

With us there were half a dozen men and one lady. And when the captain invited her to share the cover of the chart-house which abutted on our promenade, I envied her also until, after the dubious enjoyment of a few moments of splendid detachment from the common herd, she revealed signs of inward discomfort and fled to seek a less conspicuous position.

Before the land we had left was out of sight, two little clouds low on the western horizon were recognized as outlying islets of the Ivizan group. Then, as we gradually approached nearer, hills upon hills, promontories, more islets, appeared; and still we steadily steamed westwards. The sun sank in golds and greys behind the Ivizan heights, and still we went on through the grey gloom, past a rocky, indented coast on which we saw no sign of habitation.

Then, out of the darkness arose the vision of a town piled on an eminence—a town of unexpected beauty, for from the tranquil waters of the almost landlocked bay to the highest point it was sparkling with lights. It was Iviza, the one important town of the main island.

To the hoarse grating of her anchor chain the *Lulio* swung to, and through the darkness the vague outlines of rowing boats could be seen approaching.

The young boatman who was the first to accost us secured our custom, and we stepped down the accommodation-ladder into the swaying boat. Half a dozen natives followed, carrying their belongings in big cotton handkerchiefs, a form of Balearic travelling case that to me always seemed peculiarly alluring, for when not in actual service, the handkerchief-portmanteau could be folded and stowed in the pocket; or even, did occasion require, be put to other uses.

The behaviour of the boatman who rows him ashore in a new country serves the experienced traveller as symbol of the treatment awaiting him in that country. Our boatman asked one real each—twopence-halfpenny—as his fee, which was exactly the sum required of the native passengers. And that served as our token of Iviza. We would be treated with strict honesty—there was but one price either for native or stranger.

The arrival of the steamer, whose departure from Palma had attracted so little attention, was a matter of importance at Iviza. People clustered on the pier, and the steps leading to the water's edge were so densely crowded that it was difficult for those landing to find foot-room.

A burly Ivizan took the luggage, and after a cursory custom's inspection we reached the *fonda*, which was only a stone's-cast away. The *fonda*, which appeared to be the only one in the town, was delightfully situated on the harbour. The rooms allotted to us were the best in the house. Two opened from the drawing-room and one had a balcony overlooking the water. The inclusive charge was six pesetas a day—about four shillings and sixpence of English money.

Supper was in process of serving. Going downstairs, we entered the dining-room, to find one long table at which were seated about a dozen men. Judging rashly by our Minorcan experience, we classified them collectively as commercial travellers, and concluded that Iviza must be a more important

place than we had imagined, if it gave employment to so many.

The meal, which revealed a lack of inspiration on the part of the cook, was served by a solitary waiter. When it was over, we went out and felt our way about the streets. The capital town of Iviza, which is built on a high rock, faces the sea. It has no back, no other side. The old town, which is surmounted by the Cathedral and the castle, is entirely surrounded by a perfectly preserved Roman wall. The newer portion of the town, which is built on land reclaimed from the sea, lies just below the principal gate of the old city.

Passing the quaint circular fish market and the vacant market-place, which consisted of a red-tiled and raftered shed, supported on white pillars and surrounded by trees, we walked up the slope leading to the great gate in the Roman wall that encircles the ancient town.

In a niche on either side of the opening stood a massive marble figure. The heads were gone and certain other members had not outlasted the ravages of the centuries, but enough still remained to show the beauty of the workmanship. From the neck-socket of the draped figure foliage was springing, and the statue of the legionary had the scarce dignified effect of carrying a bundle of fodder, so boldly had the weeds sprouted from under his right arm.

The streets within the old city walls were dark and steep and twisted. In their secretive recesses something of the atmosphere of the Middle Ages seemed still to linger.

The Ivizans go early to bed. The lights that illumed our landing had already been extinguished, and finding our progress over these tortuous steeps a protracted stumble, we groped our way back to the *fonda*, resigned to leaving further exploration to the morrow.

We slept soundly. When our early coffee came we drank it on the balcony as we watched two boys fishing from a boat in a shallow just beneath our windows. The bait seemed to be shell-fish, and the boy in the Carlist cap who held the rod

was catching little wriggling fish as quickly as he could re-cast his hook into the water.

Then for the first time we awoke to the picturesque charm of the Ivizan's choice of material and love of colour in dress. The fishing boy wore plush trousers of a lovely pinky-fawn shade. His companion's were moss-green, and his waist scarf was scarlet. A crew of fishermen, their garments a kaleidoscope of gay hues, were breakfasting in their boat near. And along the beach beneath, a boy clad in faded blue velvet was carrying in one hand a basket of beautiful rose-coloured fish and dangling a hideously suggestive octopus in the other.

Our good friend the padre, a presbítero of Palma Cathedral, had kindly recommended us to his chosen friend, who was a beneficiado of Iviza Cathedral. So our first walk, on the morning after our arrival, led up the precipitous paths towards the superbly situated old church.

Seen by daylight the streets were vaguely reminiscent of both Palma and Mahón, without resembling either. While the whitewashed walls recalled the austere cleanliness of the Minorcan capital, the condition of the streets gave one the impression that the inhabitants subsisted chiefly upon oranges. The plenitude of balconies held more than a hint of Palma, though most of the Ivizan balconies were heavily fashioned of wood ; and from many the entire family washing (which in Palma would be dried on the flat roof), even to sheets, hung out to dry. The Ivizans showed both taste and skill in floriculture. Quite a number of the balconies were prettily decorated with pot plants, from cinerarias to peonies, in full bloom.

The market was busy when we passed. Grave-looking women, with wide-brimmed white hats perched rakishly a-top the handkerchief that covered their heads, were selling oranges or vegetables. One, with a row of moist water-jars balanced on either side of the furriest donkey I ever saw, was plying the trade of water-carrier.

We reached the Cathedral during morning service, and we

waited, enjoying the music and the tuneful clamour of the great wheel of bells that mingled so harmoniously with the sound of the organ, and wondering in which of the officiating clergy we would discover the friend of our friend. He also had been looking out for us, and as we, along with two old men, were the entire congregation, he had no difficulty in distinguishing us.

When Mass was over we met on the *mirador* outside, and though by force of nationality, religion, language, and training we ought to have been poles asunder, from almost the first moment of our acquaintance we recognised a congenial spirit in Don Pepe, as the young choristers, who clustered round, affectionately called the padre.

Under his care we re-entered the Cathedral, which, despite, or perhaps because of belonging to no known school of architecture, is very beautiful, the interior with its canopied Virgin having an inspiring sense of light. Then, accompanied by the sacristan, a grave man with a charming smile, we saw some of the treasures of the church, climbed the tower to see the comprehensive view from the top, and visited the adjacent castle, which is now used as a military barracks.

While within the fortifications we were introduced to an especially interesting specimen of the cunning traps prepared by the Romans for their unwary invaders. From one portion of the castle, which is perched high within the strong fortifications, we were guided through a long, dark, shelving passage, down, down, down, until on passing through a massive door we entered an alley, lit from above, that ended abruptly in a four-feet-high portal deep set in the great city wall, and from without partly secured by a bastion.

The ingenious plan of the ancient defenders had evidently been to leave unguarded the inconspicuous door, and when the besiegers, discovering it and imagining themselves in luck, had crept through the secret door into the alley, to shower missiles on them from the circular opening overhead. It was a shrewd device, but one hardly calculated to endear the Romans to their enemies.

Leaving the heights, we walked down towards the church of Santo Domingo, an antique building with curious red-tiled domes. The priceless treasure of this old Dominican convent is an image of Christ which for ages has been the object of great devotion. Until the last century ships on leaving or entering the harbour of Iviza were in the custom of saluting it with their flag and a shot from their cannon.

As we neared the church we saw approaching from a side street a peasant family of such attractively quaint appearance that we paused and, affecting to be admiring the prospect, waited for them to pass. They were all attired in the gala dress of the island. The sun-tanned farmer father wore a suit of old-gold embossed velvet and a purple scarf was wound about his waist. The mother wore the immoderately wide skirt gathered into a plain high-waisted bodice, the short green silk apron, the little shoulder shawl with its prettily flowered border and long fringe, and the gay embroidered head-wrap that make up the distinctive Ivizan costume. From the tip of her pigtail a brightly coloured ribbon hung down to the hem of her spreading skirts. The eldest child, a girl of eight or nine, was a diminutive facsimile of her mother. The elder boy wore a man's suit in miniature of very light blue, and a wide-brimmed yellow hat. The group tapered off with a wee boy in a quaintly cut long frock and a white Carlist cap, and a baby in bunching petticoats and a muslin cap with wings. The father, who smiled pleasantly when he saw us notice the children, carried with evident care a liqueur bottle. Moving decorously, as though bound on some important mission, they preceded us into the church.

We had paused to examine a fine old painting, and when we reached the special chapel that contained the celebrated image we found the little family already kneeling before the altar, even the youngest apparently impressed by the solemnity of the occasion.

After a few moments the father, rising from his knees and still holding the bottle, approached the padre to crave a

private word with him, and they quitted the chapel together, leaving the mother and children still on their knees.

A great silver lamp, suspended from the roof, burned in front of the *Cristo*, and all around the walls were votive offerings—models of hearts, of legs, of arms, even of heads, and little silver figures, some in peasant dress, one in a smart

frockcoat. Oddest, perhaps, of all was a pair of silver trousers.

There were medals, a fine model of a full rigged ship, a little muslin frock, another of rich satin in a glass case, all presented in token of succour prayed for and obtained in time of imminent danger to life or limb.

While we lingered, a female attendant entered the chapel

carrying the liqueur bottle, and drawing down the great silver lamp, proceeded to fill its reservoir from the store in the bottle, the family, who still maintained their devotional attitude, half turning with something of proprietary interest to watch her movements.

Returning to the body of the church, we found the padre and the father of the family in earnest converse. During a recent serious illness, explained the padre, the peasant had vowed the gift of a bottle of olive oil for the sacred lamp. Now, on his recovery, his first action had been to make a little pilgrimage to the chapel, bringing his entire family to give thanks for his restoration to health and to deliver the promised gift.

The exhibition of such unquestioning faith and gratitude in this world of scepticism was inexpressibly touching. And our hearts melted and were glad with the little household. Still, though the father declared himself again robust, a sickly pallor showed beneath his tan, and when he grasped our hands in farewell his touch was ice-cold.

Walking back along the ramparts we noticed a gentleman who, though personally unknown to us, yet bore a remarkable racial resemblance to many people we had known in Britain. He was well dressed after the English fashion, wore fawn kid gloves, and though the sky was cloudless, carried a neatly rolled umbrella.

"That is the Señor Wallis, a member of an illustrious family here. They all speak English. Shall I introduce you?" asked the padre, seeing that we were interested.

To our gratification the Señor Wallis not only spoke English admirably, but also understood it perfectly.

"My grandfather came here as British Consul," he explained. "He married and settled here. My father was Consul after him. We have always spoken the English language at home."

Here then was a family, living in a remote island where they might not hear English spoken once a year, who because their ancestor had been English carefully maintained

the language and traditions of their forebears. As the Boy said afterwards, it reminded one of Kipling's tale of Namgay Doola!

A little farther along, a massive figure, joyously arrayed in a suit of maize-coloured corduroy, a lilac-check shirt and a green hat, gladdened our vision.

"That is the present English Consul," said the padre, who seemed to be on good terms with everybody. "I shall introduce him to you."

The British Vice-Consul blushed when presented to genuine natives of the country he represented. His knowledge of the language was rudimentary, and after a few tentative efforts the conversation lapsed into Spanish. As the Boy said, it was quicker.

The padre had promised to call at three to take us to see the excavations in process on a slope just outside the city. And after lunch I strolled out to the fields in search of Ivizan wild flowers. Within a five minutes' walk of the town I soon gathered an armful—purple and yellow and white and yellow toad-flaxes, pink asters, blood-red poppies, big cream chrysanthemums, little blue and white iris, a handsome garlic-smelling pink flower, wild mignonette, both the tall and the dwarf asphodel, a yellow pheasant's eye, one or two unfamiliar blossoms, and, best of all, many regal spikes of the tall crimson gladioli that were growing among the green corn.

The padre was punctual to a moment, and we were soon mounting the rocky hill just beyond the city wall where the excavations were going on.

There was nothing in the appearance of the place to suggest that underneath our feet there existed Phœnician catacombs. Great spikes of the handsome evil-smelling asphodel were blooming all around, and two men in wide felt hats and abbreviated blouses, standing by some heaps of soil, were the only visible sign of the important work that was being done.

When we reached them we saw that their labour consisted

of passing the earth that had been brought to the surface through a fine sifter, and that close by yawned a hole overhung by a rope running on a wheel attached to a rough tripod.

The Boy was the only one of the party daring enough to accept the invitation to descend. Leaving his coat behind, he slid down the rope and vanished through a hole in the bottom of the shaft. The younger workman followed. While we awaited their re-appearance we noticed that many bones, earth-coloured, light in weight and brittle to the touch, mingled with the mounds of refuse, and that bits of broken pottery and fragments of iridescent glass leavened the heaps.

Soon the Boy and his guide, earth-stained and perspiring, for the underground atmosphere was close and hot, scrambled their way back to the surface.

The Boy's account was that when he had swung himself down the shaft he and his guide entered the subterranean passage, feeling as though he were entering his own grave, in place of merely going to view that of other people. Passing through an outer hall, they came to a narrow chamber where, by the light of an acetylene lamp, a being looking like a gnome or a ghoul was sitting on the edge of a long stone coffin grubbing in the dust and ashes that filled it.

Resting on the rim of the coffin were the relics that he had already recovered from the debris—bits of shattered pottery, and a beautiful but mutilated statuette of terra-cotta about five inches in height.

From that cell they descended to a large chamber on a lower level, where there were many coffins and a plenitude of bones.

When in recent years three Phœnician catacombs were discovered it was found that their existence had been known to the Moors, who at some unknown date had already despoiled them of treasure, leaving traces of their appropriation in the form of broken water jars and other worthless relics. Fortunately the Moors valued only the gold, so that,

in spite of the damage caused by their rough handling, a mine of precious things still remains to gladden the archæologist.

Leaving the sunny hill-side, where spring flowers were blooming among the crumbling bones of these nameless dead, we mounted to the house by the windmills, where the treasures found in the graves are primarily housed.

There also was the padre a welcome guest, and in a small dark room wonderful things were shown us. Tiny jars delicately figured; perfect vases of iridescent glass; strange bas-relief recumbent figures with stiffly extended hands; antique coins, scarabs that the Moors had bereft of their setting, ornaments that had escaped their rapacity, and old lamps enough to have satisfied even the covetous Abanazer.

It was oddly suggestive to think that, while the people who were entombed in these stone coffins thousands of years ago had known delicate arts and worn costly jewellery, their successors on the land lived in primitive dwellings and drew the water they drank in earthenware jars that in form were exact copies of those so long buried in the tombs. Truly in some things the world has not progressed!

A TRIO AND A QUARTETTE

XXVI

AN IVIZAN SABBATH

SUNDAY morning was as calm and beautiful as could be desired by visitors with only a few days in which to explore an island.

With quite unwonted energy we rose before seven o'clock, and after dressing and taking a cup of tea in our own little sitting-room, went out to the Alameda to see the country-folk coming in to Mass or market.

On the ships in the harbour flags were flying. Everybody was in gala dress. The very air felt gay. And as we sat on one of the stone seats in the leafy Alameda and watched the people streaming into town from the broad white roads that lead to San Antonio, Santa Eulalia and other villages, we chirruped with irrepressible delight, so unexpectedly and deliciously quaint were the figures that passed before us.

Some of the women rode mules, and sat perched high on a pile of sheepskins, their multi-coloured petticoats billowing

about their neat ankles. Others were packed closely into open carts that had cushions placed low on either side of their sagging floor-matting. Many walked, accompanied by vigilant elderly relatives. And oh! how demure and decorous they all looked, with their dark hair parted in the middle and severely plastered down the sides of their rosy young faces.

An object of fervent admiration in my childhood was a pincushion made of a little china doll, whose placid head and insignificant body appeared from a widely distended skirt. And on this brilliant Sunday morning the Ivizan women and girls in their exaggerated skirts seemed to me like a procession of walking dolls.

The dresses appeared to be fashioned from any material that boasted a pattern, for the Ivizan detests a plain material. Even the velvet or plush used in the men's clothes was in many instances flowered or striped. The short broad aprons were of bright-coloured silk elaborately tucked above the hem. Their deeply fringed shawls and head wraps were bordered with wreaths of gaily tinted flowers. The chains of big oblong gold beads and elaborate gold pendants in the form of crosses and crowns gave a blatant and contradictory note to the staid costume, while the gaudy hue of the ribbon that tied the end of the pigtail and fell in long ends nearly to the hem of the skirt suggested a hint of the original Eve lurking behind all this apparent demureness. Gold buttons closely set ran from the wrist of the long sleeve, which was often of green, to the elbow. And the white sandalled shoes, whose toes were caught up by a cord bound round the ankles, had a suggestion of sabots that added a Dutch touch to the picture.

Sometimes a mother in sober garments or a smiling father in a wide hat marched past in proud chaperonage of a diffident young daughter rigged out in all the family jewellery. One girl, who enjoyed the personal care of her mother, wore a gown of old rose-spotted brocade looped up in pannier form to show a pink petticoat.

To our thinking the extreme of quaintness was reached in the person of a little maid of seven or eight, whose dress was a travesty of that of her widowed mother; with the sole difference that, while the mother's mourning garb was of unrelieved black, the kerchief and tiny shawl of the child had bordering wreaths of white flowers. As she walked slowly by, a tiny entity in over-voluminous garments, the Man declared that, despite her superhuman sobriety, and the "papa, prunes, prisms" expression of her infant lips, he felt convinced that it was with difficulty she resisted a desire to skip!

They say there are ten men for every woman on the island, and our experience of that Sunday morning inclined us to believe it. From every direction came fine strapping lads moving in droves. A distinct resemblance in the dress, taken in combination with the rakish dare-devil air with which these young bloods set their wide hats to one side and swaggered along, vividly suggested the Mexican cowboy.

In striking contrast to the expansive attire of the women, the men's dress appeared designed to accentuate their natural slimness. The trousers of velvet or plush in all manner of rich shades fitted closely to the figure except at the ankle, where they spread widely. Gaily hued shirts or short full blouse jackets, usually black or blue, were worn. Red or striped sashes were wound about their waists. Most of the hats were large and adorned with gold cords. And in addition to one necktie for use, it was customary to add a second and sometimes even a third for show.

We were sincerely sorry to find that nine o'clock, the hour when we were due at the hotel for coffee, had rushed upon us. When we came out again on our way to visit the Museum, the streets about the market were busy with a moving throng resplendent in colour.

For the moment the girls appeared to have got rid of their chaperons and were parading about in quartettes, sextettes, even septettes, their tightly pleated pigtails streaming stiffly behind, their hands, holding pocket-handkerchiefs heavily edged with substantial crochet lace, sedately crossed in front.

One group that particularly rejoiced the artistic soul of the Man was made up of four demure damsels who walked in a row, the tallest at one end, the others decreasing in height till the row ended in a dear dot. Their outlines were so much alike that they had the effect of having been stencilled in a diminishing scale.

It was perhaps only to be expected that wherever one saw a bevy of girls a corresponding cluster of men would not be far distant. Yet we rarely saw them address each other.

The modern etiquette of peasant courtship in Iviza runs on strict though simple lines. A plenitude of suitors being assured, it is the maiden who makes the selection. The admirers of a marriageable girl wait for her outside the church door on Sunday. When she leaves Mass the one who has the premier claim attaches himself to her, and trots beside her for the first portion of the homeward journey, then at a fixed point or within a stated time-limit he gives place to the second, and so on until the number is exhausted. If any man seeks to exceed his allotted space, or in any other way tries to transgress the unwritten law, pistols may flare and knives are apt to spring! Apart from this the people of Iviza are peaceable, and on all points moral and virtuous. It must be admitted that certain of the more frolicsome spirits still keep up the old custom of saluting the maidens of their choice with a charge of rock salt fired at the ankles. And it is devoutly to be hoped that the unwieldy masses of petticoats serve at least one useful purpose by shielding their wearers from the saline missiles of love's artillery.

When we had reached the Cathedral square, where the Museum is situated, we found the door open and the custodian—in whom we were surprised to recognize one of our fellow-guests at the *fonda*—waiting to receive us.

Though the Museum at Iviza has been in existence for little more than two years it already contains a notable collection of Phœnician, Roman, Byzantine and Moorish remains. To an archæologist, inspection of the contents would have been

a special treat. Even to us who had little knowledge of the subject it was intensely interesting.

Within the centre cases and in the glass-doored cupboards that line the walls were many things whose worth we could not venture to guess. The varied assortment of coins seemed especially valuable. One jar found during the process of excavation had contained over six hundred specimens.

Among the other exhibits were several primitive bas-relief figures with abruptly out-jutting hands, resembling those we had seen on the previous day. Two figures had the hands clasped on the bust over something suggesting a loaf, and one had a ring through the nose.

Many of the vases and slender vials from the tombs were beautiful, both in outline and in decoration. And we saw a particularly fine scarab that had been found in one of the stone coffins immediately after our visit to the catacombs on the previous afternoon.

In the second room were some curious old documents and certain of the more bulky exhibits. And from a top shelf a row of skulls of these bygone races grinned down upon us creatures of to-day, as though their owners found something ludicrous in the idea of a special house being set apart in which to guard as treasures what to them had been but every-day possessions.

When we left the Museum the padre, with kindly thought and subtle intuition of what is most likely to interest the stranger in a foreign land, took us a-visiting. First he introduced us to the only professional artist on the island, who like everybody else in the place seemed a special friend of our sponsor.

And in the artist of this far-off southern islet we rejoiced to meet the romantic painter of fiction—the picturesque hero one reads about but rarely has the good fortune to encounter.

Don Narciso—his very name was in keeping—was young, buoyant of spirit, charming in manner, and enthusiastic regarding art. He had a thick curly black beard, abundant

wavy black hair. He wore a becoming blouse, and his loosely knotted silk tie was of *amarilla* silk.

The painter welcomed us cordially, and took us into his studio, where he was at work upon a full-length portrait of a bishop who had been a native of the island.

Round the walls were brilliant studies both in figure and landscape. We had been living close to Nature for six months. It was a pleasure to breathe again the studio atmosphere. In less than two minutes the three artists were deep in discussion of kindred interests. Their nationalities might be different, but Art has only one language. Names —Velasquez, Goya, and others of more recent date—were bandied between them, the while the padre and I sat dumbly attentive.

When we were leaving, Narciso took us into the artistically unkempt garden attached to the studio, and from the line of orange-trees beyond the old well plucked a spray heavy with the luscious blossom. This he presented to me with a grace that dignified the sprig into a bouquet. And we all parted with promise of an early reunion.

A few yards farther down the road we passed a group of ladies, whose smart Paris hats and modern raiment, seen in that land of quaint attire, gave the wearers an oddly foreign look.

"Son la familia Wallis," murmured the padre, as he raised his hat to them.

The house of the padre, our next place of call, was just beyond the seminary where the students whom we had seen leaving the Cathedral in their robes of black and scarlet were undergoing their thirteen years of probation before entering the Church.

The padre's home in all its appointments impressed us as being exactly suited to the quiet refinement of its master. From the windows one gained a superb view of the rippling waters of the landlocked harbour and of the undulating country beyond.

We had the honour of meeting the padre's mother, a lady

who, though shrunk a little by weight of years, was still hale and bright. And his sister, the widow of a distinguished officer. And his niece, who was so vivacious and charming, that when she waved to us from her balcony as we left we wondered if the *novio* who was standing in the street, whispering love up to a maiden in a mantilla on the balcony just beneath hers, had not made the mistake of a floor!

It was evidently the feast-day of one of our fellow-guests at the hotel, for at the close of the midday meal a tray of dainty Spanish sweetmeats in frilled paper cases was passed round—being handed, evidently by special instructions, to us also.

When we had helped ourselves we bowed indecisively towards the farther end of the table, saying vaguely—in the hope that our gratitude might reach the donor—"Muchos gracias, señor." The other señores were quick to indicate the benefactor, who flushed a little as he acknowledged our thanks.

While lunch was being served a dark silent young man, who was one of the regular company, several times left his place, and from our seats at table we saw him go to the open front door of the hotel and glance up and down the street, as though on the look-out for somebody. Seeing him return alone for the third time, we whispered hints of a dilatory sweetheart.

But when the eagerly expected guest did appear it was not some graceful doña, but a little baby girl, the sleeves of her white frock tied with black ribbon, who was carried in in the arms of a stout peasant nurse. As the padre told us later, our taciturn fellow-guest was the postmaster, who had lost his young wife, and this was their babe come to pay the bereaved father her weekly visit.

When we went out in the afternoon the townsfolk were promenading under the shade of the Alameda, but the *payeses* had all vanished—gone back to the rural homes whither we would like to have followed them. With the disappearance of the quaint figures the charm seemed to

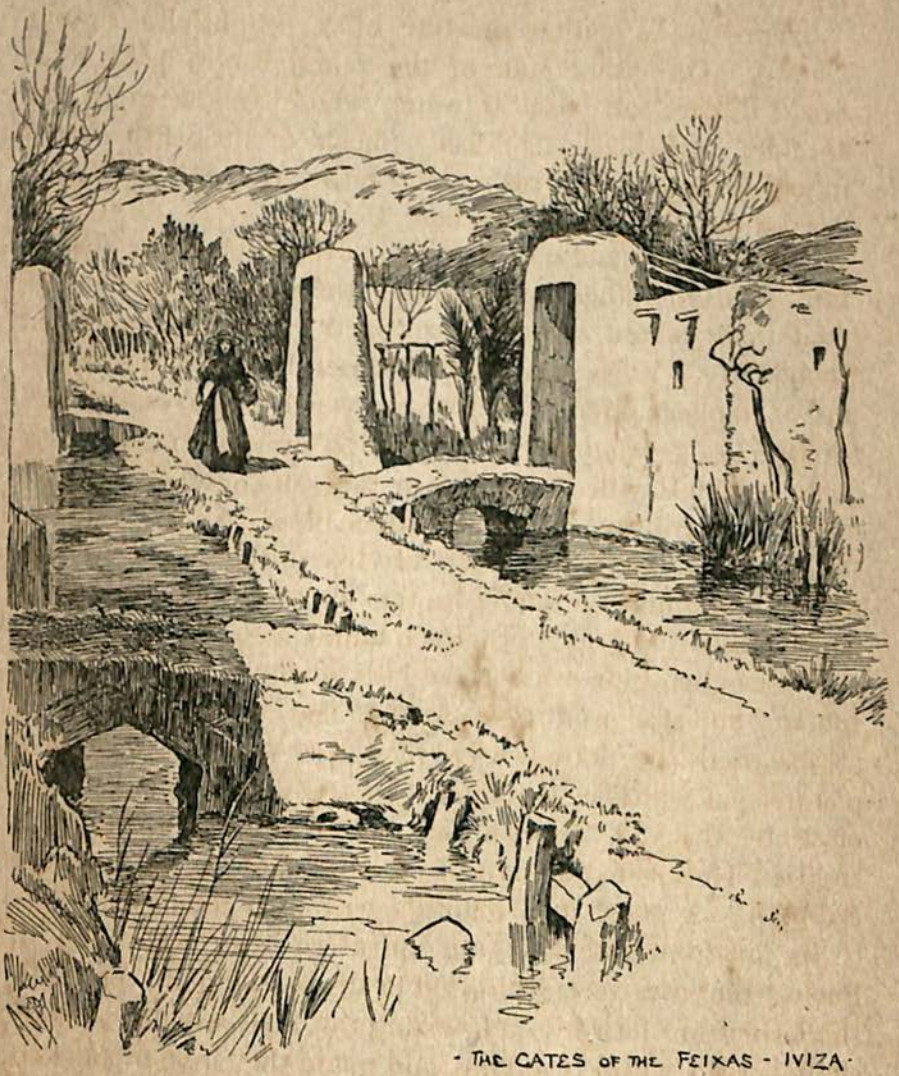
have vanished, and when we met our new friend the sacristan we cajoled him into going for a stroll along the watercourses that intersect the reclaimed land beyond the harbour.

These are a curious feature of a delightfully curious country. On either side of the raised centre path were broad ditches full of clear water, whose yellow sand was speckled with black shell-fish. Shoals of little fish darted in and out among the rushes, and on every patch of floating weed a tiny frog sat and croaked.

The fertile ground on either side of the ditches was divided into small holdings, or *feixas* as they are locally called. And there mixed crops of fruit and vegetables flourished abundantly. Vines trained to trellises bordered the water, and at frequent intervals tall whitewashed gateways, reached by little bridges and quite unsupported by walls, reared their gleaming bulk with something of the self-conscious air that might be attributed to whited sepulchres. As in Majorca, the small agriculturists appeared to live in the towns. There were no dwellings on the *feixas*, though a few had sheds from which issued the grunts of unseen animals.

The evening glow was on the hills when we left the watercourses and followed a track that led between fields of full-bearded rye dotted with blood-red poppies towards a picturesque white-walled *noria*. In the shadow of the trees close by the old Moorish well, which was encircled by a trellised vine, sat the farm folk enjoying the rest of the Sabbath. A guest in a mantilla was with them.

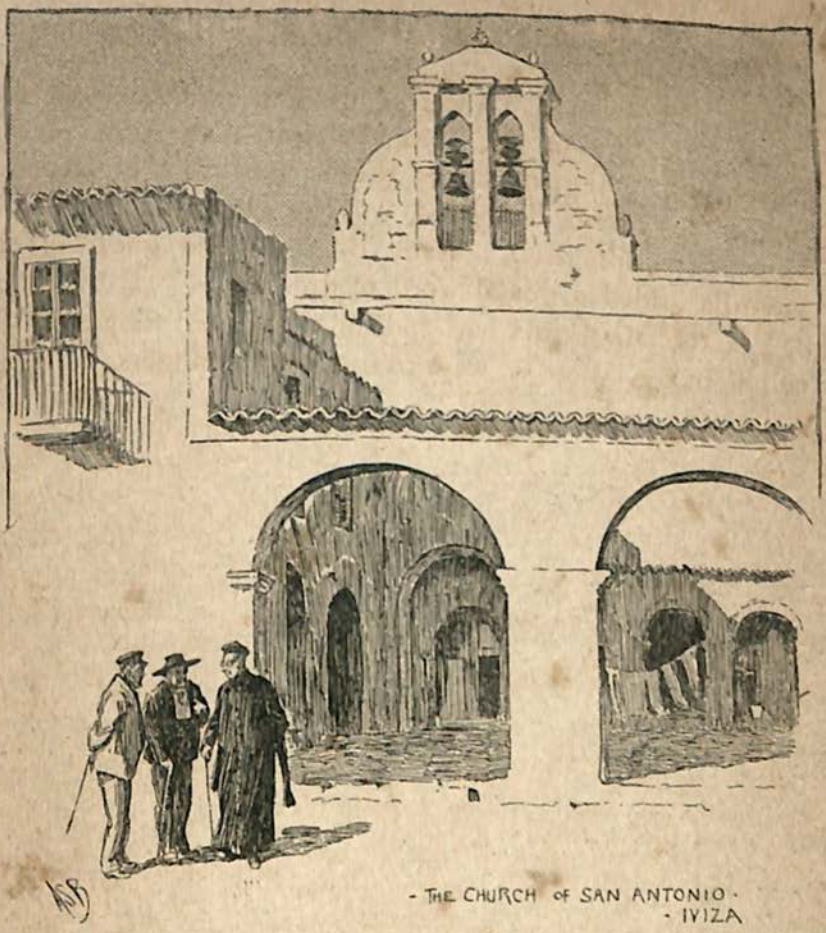
So far from resenting our intrusion they welcomed it. Seeing that we were interested in the working of the *noria*, the farmer ran forward and, seizing the long wooden donkey shaft, set the wheel revolving, and made the circle of buckets (which were not fashioned of earthenware as in Majorca, but formed from lengths of hollowed pine stem—a peseta each they cost, he told us) discharge their contents for our benefit, the primitive machinery, which made laudable objection to Sunday labour, protesting the while with groans and squeaks.



- THE GATES OF THE FEIXAS - IVIZA -

His wife—who had received us with friendly looks and kindly greeting in the Ivizan dialect, that, while greatly resembling Majorcan, omits the harsher sounds, hastened further to reveal her good will by picking me the few blossoms within reach. Even the townified guest in the mantilla added a genial word of greeting.

Yes, the Majorcans had spoken truly when they said the people of the sister isle were courteous to strangers.



- THE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO -
- IVIZA

XXVII

AT SAN ANTONIO

IT was Monday morning, and when the Man went out in search of a subject to sketch, I lured him along by my favourite watercourses.

The sun beat warmly on the limpid water, in which the swarms of little fish, looking like vivified marks of exclamation, were ceaselessly flashing about. And on the surface herbage countless glistening frogs, green, golden, bronze, and chocolate, were perched, like little kings, each on his floating throne. It was with lamentable lack of monarchical dignity

that each in turn, as he got hint of our approach, took an agile header into the water and disappeared.

Going on past the tall whitewashed gates that seemed to have so scant reason for existence, we reached the San Antonio road, and there in the shadow of a wall at the side of a bean-field the Man sat down to paint.

Against the cloudless sky the Cathedral-crowned town rose grandly. From where we sat the encircling ramparts appeared as complete and impregnable as they did in the time of the Roman occupation.

From our point of view, which afforded no glimpse of the newer houses sheltered close between the ancient gate and the harbour, the city looked much as it must have done in those bygone days when the ground on which the lower portion of the town is built was still lapped by the salt water of the bay.

While the Man painted I sat by, well content. The bean blossoms made sweet savour in our nostrils, and the gentle swish of falling water from the *noria* in an adjacent field gave a refreshing suggestion of coolness. And as we sat near the roadside quaint figures passed by in slow succession. Perched sideways on their panniered mules came broad-hatted women. The local convention that proscribes hats for Sunday female wear permits them on weekdays; and so, set jauntily on top of the sober handkerchief that covered the head, most of the peasant women wore a wide white hat, bound with black, and encircled with a black ribbon that hung in long ends behind—women whose grave sun-browned faces argued that the day for protecting the complexion was surely past.

Leaving the Man at work, I crossed to where in the raised *noria*, a dozen yards beyond the white highroad, a blindfold mule was patiently at work. All alone there by the creaking old Moorish well he was walking round and round the path, already worn to dust by the passage of his willing feet.

But if one chanced to be born a mule and had to draw water for a living, a pleasanter place in which to carry out

one's vocation could hardly be imagined. For close about the stone-sided platform that surrounded the well grew two immense fig-trees and a large pomegranate; and for many months of the year the *noria* must have been an oasis of leafy shade in the midst of sun-baked fields.

Even on that April day the fig leaves were unfolding, and the small green knobs of the first crop of fruit had sprouted close under the foliage at the tips of the ash-grey branches. The big pomegranate-tree held its spreading branches over the mule-track, as though desirous of warding off the sun from the patient worker. On the delicate tracery of branches the leaves, that always seem too minute and finely fashioned to be in perfect accord with the heavy roseate fruit, were showing rich copper hues.

In humid spots about the stone bastions of the well moisture-loving maidenhair fern was clinging. As the shaft, slowly revolving, turned the wheel, the chain of wooden buckets emptied themselves with a musical tinkle of falling water into the wooden trough beneath, from which it flowed into a big square tank.

At first sight the enduring mule had seemed the only sentient being near, but a second glance revealed abounding life. The water in the reservoir was dotted with lively black entities that proved to be tadpoles. On a decaying log sat a handsome frog with a panel of green, of so vivid a tint as to seem as though freshly enamelled, neatly let into his glistening brown back. Along the sandy bottom of the clear water a great warted toad moved sluggishly. Close in the shadow a dark trout was lurking. Within reach of my hand a golden lizard lazily sunned himself; and on the top of the wall rested a dragon-fly with a broken wing.

A swallow swooped overhead. Among the poppy-strewn barley grasshoppers were chirping merrily. In the sunshine a newly-hatched swarm of insects gyrated, tentatively exercising their wings—all Nature seemed indolently happy. But still the patient mule trod on its way. Sometimes it paused a space, and I rejoiced; but the moment the listening

ears ceased to hear the trickle of the falling water the persevering beast had again started upon the monotonous circular tour.

It must have been a case of conscience, for nobody was at hand to see whether the task was accomplished or not; but still, with eyes blinded to the beauty around, the patient mule pursued the ceaseless round, until, ashamed of my own inactivity, I longed to loosen the halter, to take off the straw blinders that covered his eyes, and to turn him into the cornfields to eat his fill.

"What have you done with yourself?" asked the Man, as he closed his colour-box and prepared to return to the hotel for lunch; "I'm afraid you must have had a dull morning."

But when I would have explained to him how excellently well I had been entertained I found it difficult. So I said nothing, for, after all, what possible social community could one find in a blindfold old mule and a handful of saltant or fluttering creatures?

In the afternoon the padre came with us, and we drove right across the island to San Antonio, the town that ranks second in importance. From Iviza diligences run to San Antonio, to Santa Eulalia, to San Carlos, San José, and San Juan, and the fare is fivepence. But Ivizan diligences are impossible things. We had seen them and shuddered, for they were merely rough carts with matted floors and close airless canvas covers. And any we had seen were so crammed that segments of squashed passengers protruded from every opening.

To secure the services of a two-wheeled carriage, a horse, and a man for a complete day costs a douro (four shillings) in Iviza, and the charge for a half-day is the same.

The padre, Don Pepe, accompanied us, and in the care of a grave-faced Ivizan clad in a mourning suit of black ribbed velvet we set off, pausing at the hamlet of San Rafael to see the fine vista of the town from the plateau before the church.

I must confess that at first sight San Antonio was disap-

pointing. What we had expected I do not know. What we found was a whitewashed village set on a rocky slope by an enclosed bay. The situation was delightful; but after the grandly characteristic city of Iviza this zealously whitewashed town, in spite of its antiquity, seemed insignificant and *new*.

Antonio, the friend whom Don Pepe sought, was away on his "possession." So while a willing messenger sped to fetch him, we visited the church. The cura was absent, though his lace-trimmed vestments—which, like the town, were white as the driven snow—were hanging to dry within the precincts by the church porch.

The church of San Antonio shares the attractive informality which is the distinctive feature of Ivizan architecture. It was once a fortress of defence against the Moors. From the flat roof we had a magnificent survey of the country about, saw the bay, which, like all the water about the island, abounds in fish, and the lighthouse, to which Don Pepe promised to take us, and the rough track up the solid rock towards the *Cueva de Santa Inés*, into whose recesses Antonio was going to guide us.

We had left the church and were moving in the direction of the lighthouse, when the padre's quick eyes noted a figure hastening towards us. The messenger had done his work. Antonio had returned.

The señor was in the prime of manhood and on the eve of marriage. After our other sightseeing was done, we were promised a glimpse of his chosen one—or, to speak quite correctly, of the damsel who had selected him; for, as I have said before, in Iviza it is the lady who chooses.

On the sunny bank near the lighthouse we encountered an interesting and venerable trio—the Alcalde, the Captain of the Port, who wore earrings, and the cura of San Antonio. With them also our padre was a favourite. The cura urged us to return to the *curato* and take coffee with him. But the afternoon was passing and there was still much to see.

So we said good-bye and left them with something of envy in our hearts, to resume their dawdle among the white flowering asters and butterflies, by the shores of the placid bay. Wherever their lives had been passed, they seemed at length to have found anchorage in a spot remote from the storms and dissensions that agitate and perplex the world.

The men walked the mile to the cave. I drove, but many times during the short journey I realized that it would have been far less exertion to walk. The road lay over wickedly disposed rock, and when my hat was not butting the canvas sides of the trap it was violently colliding with that of the driver, who, though he bounced up and down on his seat, still managed to preserve his air of imperturbable calm.

The story of this subterranean chapel is a curious and interesting one. It is believed that in the early years following the conquest, before the fortress was converted into a church, the inner chamber of the cave was used as a temple where Mass and other religious services were held. Some time later—probably towards the end of the sixteenth century—a wooden image of the martyred Saint Inés was discovered in the cave, an image that, though it was several times removed to the Church of San Antonio, always mysteriously reappeared in the cave. This was ultimately accepted as a sign that the saint desired her image to remain in the cave, which then received her name.

On the anniversary of San Bartolomé's day—the very day on which the image had been discovered—in the height of a violent tempest, a foreign barque found safe harbourage in the bay of San Antonio. On board the distressed ship was a gentleman who had in his possession a beautiful painting of Santa Inés. In his extremity he made a definite bargain with the saint, vowing that, if through her intercession the whole ship's company landed without scath, he would present her portrait to the church of the first port where they disembarked in safety.

It was on hearing of this miraculous intervention, and of the widespread notice it attracted, that the ecclesiastical

authorities at Iviza gave permission for the little subterranean cavern to be used as a place of worship.

After that time, on the annual recurrence of San Bartolomé's day, people in great numbers journeyed from all parts of the island to the little town, and after attending Mass in the parish church went with the inhabitants of the town to the cave, near which they picnicked. Then, after having taken a draught of water from the holy well in the interior of the cave, they assembled outside and danced until sunset.

This quaint custom continued until 1865, when it was modified because the roof of the cave showed signs of collapse, and the natives of Iviza had a superstitious belief that the impending catastrophe would occur on the day of the annual gathering. Since then the dance has been held in the town, but is only attended by those from a distance, as, since the scene of the festival has been changed, the girls of San Antonio refuse to take part in it.

When we had secured the key from a silent woman at the farm-house near by, we gained the mouth of the cave by treading unconventional paths—first walking in single file along the broad top of a stone wall, then treading across a tobacco patch, where, warmly sheltered by surrounding walls, the broad young leaves were growing strongly.

At the entrance to the cave Antonio and a companion who had joined him—we knew him only as "Charles, his friend" —lit candles, and close on each other's heels we crept, doubled up and with stumbling feet, through the burrow-like passage that led to the inner shrine.

Many changes must have taken place of late years, for the chapel was cumbered with fallen refuse. The arch of the roof masonry and the hollow where the altar had stood could still be distinguished, otherwise there was little token left of the strange history of this underground place of devotion. As we crawled back towards the light and the outer air, Antonio pointed to where, at the bottom of a tortuous and shelving passage, was situated the holy well.

The climax of our visit to the little white town was the promised introduction to the beloved of Antonio, whom we met in the house of her mother, in the street near the church.

Antonia could not have been more than twenty, if indeed she had quitted her teens, but in sobriety of dress and demureness of outer deportment she was a facsimile of her comely mother. It was only when you noticed that her full red lips had difficulty in refraining from curving into smiles, just as the dark hair so smoothly plastered down on either side of her rosy face seemed rebelliously determined to ripple into waves, that you realized that Antonia was overflowing with exuberant young life.

Antonio knew it, though. No disguise of decorous matronly garments or assumption of a demure manner could conceal from him Antonia's real girlish charm. One could see that by the way his string-seated chair edged imperceptibly nearer hers, and by the ingenious manner in which, without seeming to do so, he yet managed to watch her every motion.

It was at this juncture that a happy thought occurred to the padre.

Would it be possible for the Man to do a sketch—just the smallest jotting—of Antonia, as a memento of the occasion?

"Of course it would," agreed the Man. "And of Antonio, too!"

At this the lips that Antonia had been trying so hard to keep prim broke apart in irrepressible giggles and her hand slipped up to see if her rebellious hair was smooth enough to do her credit. And Antonio straightened his shoulders and gave a furtive twist to the ends of his moustache.

The light was fading, and the chairs had to be placed close enough together to satisfy even Antonio's desires—near by the open door; just outside which a row of children had already secured front places to view the show.

The sketch was necessarily hurried, even perfunctory, but it gave immense satisfaction.

"Oh! Look at Antonio," Antonia gurgled joyously. "See his moustache! Is it not fine?"

"It is like the moustache of an officer of *carabineros*," said Antonio, feeling it to see if it were actually more imposing than he had thought. "If I really look like that I ought to be a Minister of State; but—I prefer to be the husband of Antonia!"

THE CHURCH OF JESUS: IVIZA.

XXVIII

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

THE shimmer of the sunrise and the reflection of the hills in the unruffled waters of the harbour were so ethereally beautiful in these Ivizan mornings, that I found it impossible to stay in bed. On the last day of our stay I was early out on the balcony.

Scarcely anybody was about. A man in a red cap and a coat of yellow velvet was baiting lobster-pots. And a boy in velvet trousers that sun and the passage of time had faded to an inimitable shade of pale moss-green was playing with a dog. Otherwise the town seemed asleep. The scene was the perfection of drowsy restfulness, when the sudden blast of a steam-siren broke in upon the placidity, and with the sound a steamer, looking gigantic in these miniature surroundings, entered the bay.

With her appearance the world awoke. As the ship moved slowly in towards her berth, which was just below my balcony, people appeared from all directions, as though they had been lying in ambush awaiting the signal to concentrate upon a given point. Probably the fact that the military

element was present in force suggested the simile. A band of officers in full dress, with short natty astrakhan-lined overcoats and white gloves, stood a little apart from, and in advance of, the general public. Among them were the lieutenant in command of the carbineers, and the tall chief of the civil guard, who looked immense in a heavy cloak lined with scarlet.

The municipal authorities had assembled in force, also representatives of the Church, the British Consul—"Good morning, sir!" to me on the balcony—and a comprehensive gathering of townsfolk, all with the air of being pleasantly excited about something that was going to happen.

The steamer—it was the *Cataluña*—was close to the wharf now, but there was no sign on deck of any unusual occurrence. Except for the crew, a few steerage passengers, and a knot of priests who clustered on the boat deck amidships, nobody appeared to be on board. But still the crowd waited expectant.

Then just as the gangway connected the *Cataluña* with the land a solitary martial figure, a uniformed officer whose breast was decorated with several medals, appeared on the poop. And towards the ship and up the gangway, in slow and ceremonial order, moved the officers. The lieutenant-colonel of the Ivizan battalion of the *cazadores* led. Over the gangway, across the deck, up the companion, and into the arms of the decorated officer, which were outstretched to receive him. In quick succession the others passed up, to be received cordially, if not so affectionately as their colonel. Then, as in turn the waiting authorities followed, it dawned upon us that we had been close spectators of the arrival of the new Governor of Iviza, and that from our point of vantage we had witnessed his first official reception.

It was about this stage of the proceedings that among the men in uniform who were surrounding the new Governor on the poop we began to recognize different members of our hotel party.

The imposing captain of infantry was the tall man who sat next to us and spoke to nobody. The man with the bellowing voice and the beautiful eyes was the lieutenant in command of the Ivizan carbineers. The man at the end of the table was a captain of engineers. The man with the eye-glasses was the captain of the medical corps.

So much for our fancied astuteness. In place of sharing the table with a party of commercial travellers, as we had imagined, we had really been eating at the Ivizan equivalent to an officers' mess!

When everybody with any claim to the distinction had been presented and the company on the poop had dwindled down to a few, the family of the newly arrived Governor made its appearance, in the persons of three lively boys and a baby in a nurse's arms. Then, coincident with the appearance on deck of a lady in a hat and motor-veil, the six soldiers in fatigue uniform who had been in waiting sped up the gangway, to return laden with hand baggage, which, with other femininities, included a blue bandbox. And in their wake the Governor and his little tribe, accompanied by the colonel, stepped in stately measure across the wharf, and disappeared into the door of the hotel that gaped hospitably open beneath us.

As we drank the coffee that the overworked Paco had just brought us, we wondered a little what the new Governor's impressions of Iviza would be. He looked worn, we thought, as though weary with years of service; and we hoped that he would find his new home in this remote island a place of peace.

The little breakfast over, our black-garbed driver and the British Consul, who had suggested taking us to see the *Salinas*, were waiting. And we drove out in the sweet morning towards the curious series of lagoons where two great harvests of salt are yearly reaped.

The day was glorious, the air crisp, exhilarating, as we drove out over the country roads towards the wide stretch of flat land where the sea-water, prisoned by a cunning

sequence of locks into vast shallow vats, was slowly evaporating in the strong sunshine.

Although lead and zinc are mined near Santa Eulalia, the Salinas at Iviza and at Formentera form the great industry of the Ivizan group of islands, salt to the amount of nine thousand tons being shipped each year to various parts of the world.

The history of these vast salt lagoons reaches back to before the conquest. In 1871 the Salinas, which for many years previously had belonged to the State, became the property of a private company, now known as the *Salinera Española.*

The road, which led between green fields, had been lovely. An occasional girl perched on a donkey comprised almost the entire traffic. We reached the Salinas to find a scene of great brilliancy. All along the sides of the pools rose pyramids of salt, their glistening sides clearly reflected in the still water with something of the effect of carefully moulded icebergs. And along the portable line of rails strings of trucks laden with the sharp-faceted crystals of the rough salt were moving towards the wharf.

Down by the wharf everything was white—the roads, the few houses, the great stores of salt that lay awaiting shipment, the shoes of the men that stood in the flat-bottomed barges beneath with long rakes, packing away the salt as it streamed down in a sparkling white torrent from the pulverizing machine on the staging of the quay above.

From Iviza salt is shipped in great quantities to many distant countries. It was interesting to hear that even in salt the taste of the nations varies—Russia liking hers large in crystal, America preferring that supplied her to be as fine as possible.

We stood on the pier that jutted out over the clear green waters of the islet-studded bay, watching the men at work filling the barges with the salt that was to be transhipped to the Italian barque that lay in the bay of Iviza. A fine, robust, brown-faced smiling lot of men they were. And the

work on which they were at the moment engaged seemed mechanical and easy. Hanging on the railing close by were fishing nets, and they told us they caught many fish in the bay.

On that bright airy morning the work seemed pleasant and not over-arduous: different from what it must be when the fierce southern heat has dried up the sea-water and the labour consists of standing under the burning sun, beset by mosquitoes, scooping up the salt from the floor of the lagoons and building it up into pyramids. If ever there was specially thirsty work it must be salt salving.

There seemed to be surprisingly little accommodation for the labourers near the Salinas. In summer, when close upon a thousand labourers are employed, a large proportion of them are forced to live in the town of Iviza and add a walk of many miles to the exertion of the day.

At the hotel at luncheon the newly installed Governor with all his family (except the baby) and the colonel sat by us at table. The elder men were still in uniform, but the *habitués* of the board had been quick to return to mufti.

Our walk that afternoon was in the care of Don Narciso, and under his guidance we walked through pleasant country byways towards the few clustered houses that comprise the little village of Jesus, to see a notable picture in the church there.

It was through a fair green world that Narciso led us that radiant afternoon — under trees heavy with great green velvet almonds, and through fields deep in full-bearded grain and rich in blood-red poppies and crimson gladioli, among which wide-hatted women, the upper of their many skirts tucked up pannier fashion, were busy working.

Just outside the Church of Jesus, at a *noria* in the shade of a tall palm, trellised vines, and budding pomegranate-trees, a sun-browned man, his little brown son, and an old brown mule were working in happy unison. The church itself belonged to that informal type of architecture in which Iviza

abounds. The roof was red-tiled, and without and within the building was severely whitewashed. The special panel which formed the centre of the great altar-piece was the work of an unknown painter of the early Valencian school.

In a broad, simple composition it represented the Virgin and Holy Child surrounded by angels. The details were obscure, even after Don Narciso had thrown open the big door of the church to allow more light to enter; but the colour was remarkably rich and full. And though the surrounding subjects were inferior in workmanship, their subdued tones harmonized well with the dignity of the central panel.

The cura was not at home, but his parents, a dear old peasant couple who lived with him, received us warmly, offering that ready and insistent hospitality that struck us as being a special feature of the Ivizan life. Our winter in Majorca had accustomed us to the polite but purely perfunctory fashion in which, like the Spaniard, the Majorcan tenders food to all comers, secure in the knowledge that it will be declined. But when the Ivizan offers refreshment to the visitor he means it to be accepted.

The moment we were all seated on chairs set round the walls of the wide, airy room into which the large door directly opened, the good old father hastened to bring out a tray of tiny glasses and a decanter of the pure, amber-hued Ivizan wine—wine that had been pressed from grapes ripened close by. And the mother ran to fetch a plate of sweet biscuits and goblets of clear water. Then they watched with genuine pleasure while we sipped the wine, and, having praised it in all sincerity, followed the custom of the country and drank of the water.

The sole family of the worthy couple had been two sons, both of whom had shown a vocation for the Church. The one in whose house they lived was now cura of Jesus, the other that of San Raphael, only a short walk distant.

Our casual visit to the little hamlet left in our minds an unfading picture of rustic sweetness of atmosphere and of modest pride that had attained its ideal.

From there we went to see a fine old country house, one of the "possessions" of a friend of Don Narciso, who, though he does not live there, courteously cycled over to do the honours. From the roofed *mirador* we had a good view of the town rising on its rocky height above the sea.

Here, too, we had evidence of the Ivizan spirit of hospitality. Native wine was again offered us, and from the orange gardens down by the palm-encircled *noria* we got abundance of huge oranges, and a curious fruit that, with the outward appearance of the lemon, boasted the sweetness of the orange allied to a floating essence of bergamot.

There the kindly Don Pepe joined us, and together we walked back through the gloaming.

At dinner the new Governor, still in uniform, his handsome wife and their three nice boys again were present. After the State reception of the morning, it amazed us to see with what an utter lack of consideration they were treated. The very officers who had risen at daybreak and donned their best uniforms to honour his arrival sat at table with the Governor as though unconscious of his presence.

The sole sign of deference that we could discover was that the landlord and Paco had put on their best coats in which to wait at table. But there the distinction ended. In common with the others, the Governor and his family patiently endured the tedious service. To me it was almost painful to see the representative of official power sit uncomplainingly, until the overworked Paco, having made the round of the long table, handed the few chilled fragments still remaining in the dish to the hero of the imposing little ceremony of the morning. It made us inclined to wonder if the hospitality of the Ivizans was confined to the humbler classes, or whether it would have been a breach of Ivizan etiquette had one or other of the principal residents offered these new-comers the freedom of their homes.

So ended our visit to Iviza. For when dinner was over and our farewells said, the *Cataluña* was ready to take us back to

Palma. Our experience of the remote island that we had approached with doubts had been a thoroughly delightful one, and when we steamed out over the placid water we watched the lights of Iviza sink in the distance with the feeling that we left real friends among the kindly islanders.

Our visit had been a short one, yet our minds held precious memories of the sincere and kindly people—of the padre, Don Pepe, and his affectionate care for his flock; of Narciso and his pictures, of the loves of Antonia and Antonio, and of the dear old father and mother of the cura of Jesus.

Though it lacks the savage grandeur of some parts of Majorca, Iviza has beautiful and romantic scenery, and life in the lovely island is sweet and simple and wholesome. There is little money in circulation, but more is not needed. The ground is fertile, the climate gracious, the water-supply is unfailing, and fish may be had for the catching. So food is plentiful and cheap. House rent in the town of Iviza may be counted at about a half less than in Palma, and when the townsfolk speak of the cost of living in the smaller towns, such as San Antonio, they hold up their hands at the amazing cheapness of it.

This, then, was our impression of Iviza, the remote island about which such extravagant tales are circulated. That fire-arms and knives still play a part when the interests of rival lovers clash is openly acknowledged. But during our visit the course of true love must have run smoothly, for no echo of pistol shot or clash of weapon marred the peace of our stay.

As we found the people of that forgotten isle—honest, courteous, generous, and hospitable, quaint of dress and soft of voice—so have I written.

MOORISH TOWER AT THE PORT OF ALCUDIA.

XXIX

LAST DAYS

THE golden months had flown past, speeding so swiftly that we felt as though time must have defrauded us. Scarcely a day seemed to have elapsed after our return from Iviza before we were saying, "Next week we must go home."

But before beginning preparation for departure, three days were our own. Three clear days in which to take a real lazy holiday; for though the holiday spirit had pervaded our wanderings, we had all been working hard. To be really idle we knew we must seek a spot already familiar to us, one that offered no temptation to register fresh impressions. And a brief family conclave found us unanimous in the opinion

that the port of Alcudia, from which, in January, we had sailed to Minorca, was the ideal place.

Friday morning found us at La Puebla station, mounting the little one-horse diligence that runs to and from Alcudia in connection with the trains.

I shared the box-seat with a semi-comatose driver, a big box, a bigger sack, a loaf of bread, and sundry nondescript parcels. Besides my people, the only occupant of the interior was a bronzed young man who had travelled in the same compartment with us from Palma.

In the train the studied perfection of his dress had made me wonder on what errand of ceremony he was bound. His trousers and waistcoat were of very light piqué, his coat of shining black alpaca. His linen was new, his tie resplendent; his watch-chain of linked metals was an inch broad; his face beamed with expectancy; his whole being seemed to vibrate with glad impatience.

The way to Alcudia passed through a rural district, running at first by many small holdings, where patient mules were turning water-wheels to irrigate the little fields where their masters were hard at work.

The driver, curling himself up in his corner of the box-seat, dozed off after the manner of diligence drivers who have started on their first journey long before dawn. The horse, taking advantage of his master's somnolence, walked more and more and more slowly, until at intervals the driver, unwillingly opening half an eye to see how far we had progressed and finding us almost at a standstill, would urge him on with opprobrious words.

The day was lovely—how often I seem to have written that! In the lush green corn grasshoppers were chirping. By the wayside the convolvulus was opening its big pink cups. And in the dark interior of the diligence the bronzed man was telling his story.

He was a son of the district towards which we were slowly advancing. His parents had a wayside *taverna* and a tiny farm. But in the family there were many mouths

to feed, and though in Majorca there was always food for all, money was scarce. So five years ago he had gone to Algeria to push his fortunes. Now, having made a little money, he was returning, without warning of his coming, to his old home. As to the future? Well, that was for his parents to decide.

One did not require to be told that the five years of exile had been industrious and frugal ones. Now the great moment was at hand. He was already experiencing the expectant joy of the returning wanderer.

When the small holdings had been left far in the rear and rocky hills rose beyond the fertile fields, his assumed composure vanished. He became frankly excited, eagerly watching the lonely road and scanning the fields for sign of familiar forms and faces.

As the coach made a momentary pause while the driver delivered a loaf and an amorphous parcel to a road-mender, the Exile, thrusting his head from the back window, shouted greeting. And the roadman, recognizing an old friend, ran after the already receding coach to grasp him warmly by the hand.

The driver was wide-awake now, and evidently determined to make up for lost time. And the cigars our Exile wished to give the *caminero* had to be thrown on the road, from which with grateful nods and smiles he picked them up.

As he drew near his old home the Exile, though even more keenly alert, became silent. When the little *taverna* by the wayside came in sight the driver, rising to the occasion, put on pace and pulled up before the door in grand style.

The unusual sight of the coach stopping brought the old *tavernero* and his wife to the wide doorway. From my perch on the box I saw their expressions change from surprise to amazed delight. It was the father—a typical Majorcan with a hale spare figure and shrewd kindly face—who, advancing first, seized his exultant son in his arms. The mother held back a moment, quivering with joyous

emotions, her lips parted in speechless welcome. Then, running forward, she fell upon his neck.

The host and hostess of the Fonda Marina gave us hearty welcome, and, as before, heaped benefits upon us. In our three months of absence young Cristobal had grown perceptibly. He was at school now, and had already learned to recite in Spanish sing-song the days of the week and the months of the year.

Our former rooms overlooking the bay were vacant, and for three long summer days we wandered as we listed—over the white sands, which were now rich with the rare shells and scarlet coral for which, on our previous visit, I had looked in vain; or among the pines, whose sun-distilled fragrance mingled with the sea air. One radiant morning we took a luncheon basket and wandered as far as the Albufera, but at all other times the excellent cooking of the mistress of the *fonda* lured us back in time for meals.

The few people we encountered looked pleasantly at us. And the Captain of the Port—a retired naval officer who spent much of his time fishing from a boat moored at his own front door—most courteously called, and presented me with a bouquet sent by the ladies of his house.

Monday evening saw us back at the Casa Tranquila. With Tuesday began the uncongenial labour of dissolution ; for the little house that during the never-to-be-forgotten months had been our headquarters had to be emptied of its contents. Our belongings were few in number, but our manner of living had brought us into such intimate relations with them that we felt personal interest in each article. We had developed quite an affection for our yellow cups and saucers with their crude bunches of red and blue flowers ; and our chocolate-pot of brown and yellow native ware, with its perforated lid and wooden pestle, ranked as a family friend.

The great vine that during the first months of our stay had converted the veranda into an airy bower was again covered with foliage and with embryonic clusters of grapes that some more lucky tenants would enjoy. The rose-bushes that had

bloomed all winter were sending out an abundance of bud-laden shoots. Ripe lemons still clung to the higher branches of the tree, though the new fruit was already formed.

There was scant time for all we had to do. Yet we managed to pay good-bye visits; to take final peeps at our favourite haunts; to secure on behalf of a poultry-fancying friend a setting of the eggs of certain Moorish-looking fowls whose jet black bodies were topped by huge white feather turbans; to dig up bulbs of the most curious kinds of fly orchis for another friend who is so fortunate as to possess a "wonder garden."

Our final day, which rushed upon us before we had steeled ourselves to meet it, was deplorably wet. It seemed as though the climate that had treated us so generously was weeping at the thought of our departure.

We lunched daintily at the home of our good friends the Consul and his wife. Then came the moment when, for the last time, the bells of Bartolomé's chariot jingled at the door of the Casa Tranquila, and the neighbours came out to wish us God-speed. None of them came empty-handed. Pepe brought his finest carnations. The Andalusian lady, her entire brood clinging to her matronly skirts, also offered flowers, and the retired gentleman who lived in the lordly mansion across the way hastened to cut his choicest roses.

So with the carriage full of fragrant evidence of good will, we drove off, to pause a moment at Apolonia's door to bid her farewell. At the distribution of odds and ends a rug and a hat had been allotted to Apolonia. And when she seized this opportunity of thanking us for the trifles sent her, Apolonia spoke appreciatively of the rug, but there were tears in her bright eyes when she referred to the *sombrero*. And that makes one wonder how it is that the utterly useless and incongruous gifts are often the most valued. The dear old soul had never worn a hat in her life and certainly never would. The article could be of no possible use to her, but perhaps, like Jess in the *Window in Thrums* with her mantle, she "would aye ken it was there."

As we turned the corner we got a glimpse of Mr. and Mrs. Pepe carrying a gaily coloured handkerchief containing the discarded suit of the Boy's that had fallen to Pepe's share. Waving the bundle, they indicated that they were already on their way to the tailor's to have the suit altered.

The Angelus was ringing as the *Miramar* steamed out into the mist. Standing at the stern, we looked back while the rain-clouds gradually blotted out the town, and thought of the little house at Son Españolet standing empty and forlorn.

We had hoped that when the inevitable hour of parting came we might leave in one of those magnificent sunsets under which we had so often watched the mail-boat start for Barcelona. But though our last sight of Majorca was veiled with rain and tears, we will always remember it as a land of sunshine and of smiles.

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INDEX

AFTERGLOW, 251
Alaró, 204
  Castle of, 211
  Children of, 213
Albufera, the, 173
Alcudia, 169, 175
  Port of, 170
Almudaina Palace, 27, 149
Almudaina, La, 265
Aloes, 184, 188
Amphitheatre, Roman, 176
Amusements, 277
Andalusia, family from, 22, 332
Andraitx, 111
  Port of, 117
Aquarium at Porto Pi, 282
Archduke Luis Salvador, 66, 82
Arracó, 123
Artá, 227
  Caves of, 232
Asparagus, wild, 288
Asphodel, 286, 298
Astronomers, British, 55

BANNERS, Hall of the, 235
Barbarossa, 198
Barcelona, 1
Barnils, Hotel, 5, 6
Barranco, the, 100
Basket-making, 238
Begonias, 240
Bellver, Castle of, 4, 51
Biniaraix, 100, 249
Birthday party, 102
Boot-brushing, 190
Borrow, 49
Breeches, baggy, 64, 159, 164, 282
British Consul at Iviza, 297, 321
  „ „ „ Mahón, 200
  „ influence in Minorca, 186
Bull-fighting, 277
Butterflies, 284
Byng, Admiral, 195

CABO BLANCO, 211
Cabo de Pera, 182, 237
Cabrera, 169, 211
Cabritt and Bassa, 209
Cactus (prickly pear), 21, 122, 124, 160, 189, 205
Cala Fonts, Minorca, 198
Cala Retjada, 238
Calvario at Pollensa, 160
Candelabra, silver, 149
Capdepera, 231, 237
Cape Vermay, 238
Carabineros, 77
Carthusian Monastery, 71
Cas Catalá, 109
Castle of Alaró, 211
  „ „ Bellver, 4, 51
  „ and fortifications, Iviza, 294
Catalans, Cave of the, 218
Cathedral, Palma, 134, 143, 147
  „ Iviza, 294
Cave at Genova, 282
  „ of the Holy Well, 139

Cave of Ramon Lull, 86
„ „ Santa Inés, Iviza, 316
„ Smugglers', 87
Caves of Artá, 232
„ the Dragon, Manacor, 217
Chaperonage, 5, 239, 268
Charcoal stove, 45
Charioteer, our, 67, 74, 152, 277, 332
Chopin, 12, 70
Christians, early, 115
Christmas Eve, 134
„ market, 132
Church of Jesus, Iviza, 324
Ciudadela, Minorca, 181
Clubs, 275
Cobbler and his wife, 21, 333
Coinage, 49
Columns, Queen of the, 236
Commercial travellers, 182, 200
Conquistador, the, 4, 10, 52, 83, 109, 139, 144, 181, 194, 232
„ Feast of, 143
Conscripts, 166, 280
Consell, 204
Consul, our friend the, 15, 43, 131, 202, 332
Consumos, 46, 127, 133
Cookery, 11, 33, 65, 93, 113, 156, 171, 206, 227, 236
Coral, 331
Cost of living, 276
Courtship, 268, 304, 318
Customs, 5, 130

DANCES, religious, 213
Dancing at San Antonio, Iviza, 317
Delights, Cave of, 218
Deyá, 91, 254, 259
Diligence, travelling by, 105, 126, 225, 283, 329
Dogs for hunting, 239
Dress, fashionable, 266
Dress, native, 10, 61, 63, 159, 226, 265, 293, 312
Dromios, the two, 165, 168

EAGLES, 71, 211, 260
Electric light, 17, 136, 206
Enciamada, the, 6
Esglayeta, 68
Exile, returned, 330

FAIRY, the Good, 245, 250, 252 255
Ferrer, 3
Firewood, 45
First communicants, 248
Flowers, wild, 99, 121, 141, 192, 220, 240, 258, 285, 286, 298
Fondá de Mallorca, Palma, 5
„ „ Rande, Artá, 227
„ Central, Mahón, 185
„ Feminias, Manacor, 216
„ Marina, Alcudia, 170, 331
„ at Iviza, 291
Fondas, country, 274
Footgear, 10
Fornalutx, 100
French influence, 98
Frogs at Iviza, 311
Furnishing, 17

GARDENING, 21, 45
General Chanzy, wreck of, 182
Genova, 282
Governesses, 268
Governor of Iviza, 321, 326
Grand Hotel, Palma, 4, 204, 214, 274
Gymnesias, 11

HOLY THURSDAY, procession on, 260
Hoo-poo, 243
Hospederia, 67, 72, 90, 260
Hospitality, 15, 325
Hotel Barnils, Palma, 5, 6
„ Grand, 4, 204, 214, 274

Hotel Marina, Sóller, 92, 97, 105, 244
Hot months, the, 273
House-hiring, 16
Housekeeping, 23

Ilex, forest of, 239
Inca, 63
Iviza, 289
  British Consul at, 297, 321, 322
  Castle and fortification, 294
  Cathedral, 294
  Cave of Santa Inés, 316
  Church of Jesus, 324
  Cost of living, 327
  Courtship, 304, 318
  Dress, 293, 302, 308, 312
  Driving, 314
  Early occupation of, 289
  Fonda, 291
  Frogs, 311
  Hospitality, 325
  Market, 293
  Museum, 304
  New Governor, 321, 326
  Noria, 308, 312, 324
  Phœnician catacombs, 298
  Roman wall and statues, 292
  Salinas, 323
  San Antonio, 314
  San Rafael, 314
  Santo Domingo, 295
  Small holdings, 308
  Wild flowers, 298

King Alphonso IV, 209
„ Jaime, el Conquistador, 4, 10, 52, 83, 109, 139, 144, 181, 194, 232
„ Jaime II, 149
„ Sancho, 69, 84
Kitchen, farm, 103, 258

Language, 48, 121, 196, 200
Laundress, our, 49, 332
Lavender, sweet, 141
Locusts, 284
Lonja, the, 56
Lull, Ramon, 83

Mahón, 184
Mallorquin antiquities, 81, 150, 177, 240
„ prices, 7, 43, 44, 112, 155, 168, 170
Manacor, 216
Marketing, 7, 63, 80, 132, 159, 164, 189, 225, 283
Martel, French expert, 219
Mas, Juan, 167
Masked penitents, 263
Military service, 280
Minorca, 181
  Athenæum at Mahón, 189
  Barbarossa, 198
  Boot-brushing, 190
  British Consul, 200
  „ influence, 186
  Byng, Admiral, 195
  Cala Fonts, 198
  Ciudadela, 181
  Commercial travellers, 182, 200
  English words, 196
  Fonda Central Mahón, 185
  Market at Mahón, 189
  San Luis, 195
  Talyots, 190
  Taula, 192
  Villa Carlos, 198
  Whitewash, 185
  Wreck of the *General Chanzy*, 182
Miramar, 75
Monastery, Carthusian, 71
Montjuich, 3
Moorish oppression, 144
„ refugees, 232
„ tower, 173
Mosquitoes, 118, 285
Music, 31, 102, 140, 145

NAVIDAD, 128
Nightingales, 245
Noria, 174, 308, 312, 324

OFFERINGS, votive, 162, 297
Olive-oil factory, 103
Operations in church, exciting, 220
Orchis, fly, 220, 286
Our Lady of the Peak, 164
„ „ „ Refuge, 209

PALMA DE MALLORCA, 4
Almudaina, 27, 149
Body of Jaime II, 150
Cathedral, 134, 143
„ treasures of, 147
Consumeros, 46
Customs office, 5
First impression, 4
Grand Hotel, 4, 204, 214, 274
Hotel Barnils, 5, 6
Lonja, the, 56
Markets, 7, 132
Port, 27
Post-office, 129
San Francisco, church of, 85
Social life, 266
Tavern at the port, 32
Palmettos, 160, 238
Palm Sunday, 245
Peak, Our Lady of the, 164
Penitents, masked, 263
Phœnician catacombs, Iviza, 298
„ village, 239
Pigs, 134, 181, 183
Plants, the rarer Balearic, 287
Plum pudding, 130
Pollensa, 155
Port of, 157
Town hall of, 165
Port of Palma, 27
Porto Pi, 4, 15, 273, 276, 285
Post-office, Palma, 129
Prices, Majorcan, 7, 43, 44, 112, 155, 168, 170
Puebla, La, 154, 329
Puerto Cristo, 217
Puig Mayor, 100, 105, 244, 245, 249, 256, 257

QUEEN of the Columns, 236
„ of Spain, birthday of, 14

RAIN, 10, 92, 203, 271
Ramon Lull, 83
Refuge, Our Lady of the, 209
Refugees, Moorish, 232
Relics, sacred, 147
Rent, house, 19, 250
Road-mending, 252
Roman amphitheatre, 176
„ gateway, 169
„ graves, 177
„ statues, Iviza, 292

SALINAS, 323
Saloon accommodation, first, 2, 194, 197
„ „ second, 180, 194, 197, 202
Salt, shipping, 323
Samphire, 207
San Antonio, Iviza, 314
San Francisco, church of, 85
San Lorenzo, 226
San Luis, Minorca, 195
San Rafael, Iviza, 314
San Roch, Feast of, 213
Sand, George, 12, 70
Santa Catalina, 15, 18
Santa Maria, 62
Santo Domingo, Iviza, 295
Scots visitors, 278
Secoma, 125
Sereno, the, 12
Servants, 276
Shells, 172, 282, 331
Smugglers' cave, 87
Snow, 271
Social life, 266
Sóller, 94, 243
Port of, 96, 257

Sóller, Fiesta at, 283
Son Españolet, 15, 18, 46, 166, 273
Són Mas, Andraitx, 115
Son Moragues, 82
Son Puigdorfila, 138
Son Rapiña, 138, 273
Son Servera, 230
Sponges, 282
Squire and Lady, 204, 272, 278
Steamer *Ancona* of Leith, 30
Balear, 1, 3
Cataluña, 321
Isla de Menorca, 197
Lulio, 290
Miramar, 34, 333
Monte Toro, 180
Vicente Sanz, 194
Villa de Sóller, 97
Sunshine, 270

TALYOTS, 190
Taula, 192
Taylor, Bayard, 69
Tea, 6, 81, 241
Temple, the white, 76
Terreno, the, 15, 51, 273, 276
Tobacco, 32, 119, 317
Torrentes, 94, 117, 140, 249
Tourists, 28, 281
Tower, Moorish, 173
Town Hall, Pollensa, 165
Train, travelling by, 61, 153
Travellers, commercial, 182
Travelling by diligence, 105, 108, 126, 154

VALLDEMOSA, 69, 80, 260
Vegetable man, our, 25, 50
Vermay, Cape, 238
Vigilante, our, 39, 277
Villa Carlos, Minorca, 198
Votive offerings, 162, 297

WELLS, chain (norias), 174, 308, 312, 324
Whitewash, 185
Wild asparagus, 288
Wild flowers, 99, 121, 141, 192, 220, 240, 258, 285, 286, 298
Wind at Minorca, 191
Windmills, 122
Wine shop, 65, 112
Winter climate, ideal, 270

YACHTING, 275
Yacht of the Czar, 28

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